Marcus Minucius Felix

HIS

OCTAVIUS;

OR, A

Vindication

OF

CHRISTIANITY

AGAINST

Paganism.

Translated by *P. LORRAIN* Gent.

LONDON,

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TO THE

REVEREND

JOHN TILLOTSON D.D.

DEAN *of* CANTERBURY, *and*
Chaplain *in* Ordinary *to*
His MAJESTY.

REVEREND SIR,

WHEREAS *other* Dedications *are grounded merely upon* Reſpect *and* Honour, *or upon the proſpect of ſome* Advantage *to the* Book,

or Author; this *is more immediately an Effect of* Juſtice: *ſince it is by Your Encouragement that this* Tranſlation *appears in Publick, You having been pleaſed to peruſe and approve it. Yet this, SIR, is not all I have to alledge for this* Dedication: *For whether I conſider* You *as a Zealous* Defender *of our* Chriſtian Religion *againſt* Atheiſm; *or of our* Reformed Religion *againſt the* Romiſh Superſtion, *which is the old* Paganiſm *reviv'd and varniſh'd*

niſh'd over; I cannot make a fitter Choice of a Patron, *either for* MINUCIUS FELIX, *or my ſelf, who am,*

REVEREND SIR,

Your moſt oblig'd, and
Moſt devoted Servant,

London, July 10. 1682.

PAUL LORRAIN.

THE PREFACE.

THOUGH a *Preface* to ſo ſmall a *Treatiſe* as this is, may by ſome be judged needleſs and ſuperfluous, yet having reaſon to believe, that the READER will not be unwilling to underſtand ſomething concerning the *Book* it ſelf, its *Author*, and the *End* of publiſhing it in *Engliſh*, I ſhall endeavour, as briefly as may be, to give *him* all the ſatisfaction I can.

AS for the *Treatiſe* it ſelf (which contains a *Conference* or *Diſpute* between a *Heathen* and a

Christian, in defence of their respective *Religions*) it has been always accounted one of the most Eloquent and Curious *Pieces*, that *Antiquity* has transmitted to us; and in which so many Excellencies shine forth, as it is hard to determine whether it be more eloquent or pithy; more florid or sound and convincing. The *Relations* are succinct and clear; the *Arguments* strong and perswasive; the *Allegations* pertinent and delightful, and the *Whole* deck'd with so comely a grace, and such lively figures of *Rhetorick*, as makes it truly admirable. The *Heathen* enters the Lists first, and alledges all that can be thought of, in favour of *Pagan Idolatry*, and all that the *Hell-born* Malice of those

thoſe times, had invented againſt the *Chriſtians*, preſſing it home with all the advantages that *Art* and *Learning* can afford. The *Chriſtian* on the other ſide, with a great deal of ſoundneſs and addreſs, overthrows all his *Reaſonings* in defence of *Heathen Superſtition*; beats him with his own Weapon; demonſtrates to the eye the palpable falſeneſs of thoſe *Scandals* rais'd againſt the *Chriſtians*, and aſſerts their *Religion* with ſo much vigor and truth, and repreſents it ſo lively (as it was all beautiful in its primitive *Purity* and *Simplicity*) that it can't but greatly affect and delight the Devout READER, who muſt needs rejoyce to ſee the Natural amiableneſs and Charms of that

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Religion, which (alas!) the Superſtitious inventions and the unſuitable lives of its *Profeſſors* have ſo miſerably diſguis'd. Beſides all this, the *Diſcourſe* contains ſuch an immenſe variety of *Inſtances* and *Hiſtories* of great Antiquity, ſuited to the *Diſpute* in hand, as makes the reading of it very pleaſant and agreeable; inſomuch, that I dare ſay, that never more *Matter* was crouded into ſo ſmall a *Volume*. But I ſhould be too tedious, ſhould I endeavour but to touch the Heads of thoſe peculiar *Excellencies* it is adorned with; wherefore I ſhall break off here, and add a few words concerning the *Author* *MINUCIUS FELIX*, whom we find to have been a *Roman Knight*, and by Profeſſion

ſeſſion a *Lawyer* or *Advocate*, who were commonly call'd *Orators*: And as to the Reputation he was in, St *JEROME*'s Teſtimony may ſuffice for all, who calls *him* a *Great Roman Orator*. And indeed he who peruſes the *Book* in *Latin*, ſhall find that he was no leſs. As touching the *Parties* introduc'd to maintain the *Diſpute*, we have no further account to give of them, what they were, beſides what's here expreſs'd; though ſome ſuppoſe, that the *CÆCILIUS* here mentioned, was that Great *CÆCILIUS*, who was afterwards ſo Famous amongſt the *Chriſtians*, and in remembrance of whom St *CYPRIAN* took the Name of *CÆCILIANUS*.

THE

The Preface.

THE *End* of my *Tranſlating* this *Great Orator*, was chiefly that this rare and uſeful *Piece* might no longer walk up and down as a Stranger amongſt us, but become of our familiar acquaintance, by appearing in an *Engliſh* Garb; though I can't but confeſs, that the hopes I conceiv'd that my Name might exempt it ſelf from common Oblivion, by being ſeen in the *Title-Page* with the Famous *MINUCIUS FELIX*, was no ſmall inducement to me, to undertake this Labour. But beſides all this, I thought this *Treatiſe* would be of ſpecial uſe in this *Atheiſtical* and *Apoſtatizing* Age, to repreſent to our unthinking *Godleſs* Crew, the unreaſonableneſs of what they would

would ſo fain make themſelves and others believe, *viz.* That this *Univerſe* is an Effect of *Chance*, and not of *Wiſdom*; and that the Glorious *Fabrick* of *Heaven* and *Earth*, had no *Architect*, but was at all adventures jumbled together into this Excellent *Order*, by a fortuitous Concourſe of *Atoms*: An *Opinion* ſo groſly contradictory to *Senſe* and *Reaſon*, that it cannot be admitted by any, but thoſe who have ſhaken hands with their own Nature, and by their Vices and Debaucheries have degraded themſelves beneath the Beaſts that periſh; for they know and acknowledge their *Maſters* and *Benefactors*: But theſe more Brutiſh than the *Beaſts*, know neither their own,

nor

nor the World's Great *Lord* and *Maker*. Neither will it (as I hope) prove leſs ſeaſonable in this dark night of *Apoſtaſie*, to hold forth to our *nominal Chriſtians*, but *practical Heathens*, the genuine Luſtre and Brightneſs of that *Holy Profeſſion*, which once ſhone ſo gloriouſly in the *Countenances* and *Lives* of its *Primitive Embracers*, that it made all the World to be in love with, or to admire it; if by this means they might be brought to bethink themſelves, and at length to return into the Way of *Truth* and *Holineſs*, from whence they are gone aſtray.

AS to this *Tranſlation*, the READER may be pleas'd to take notice, that I have all along made great

great uſe of the *French* of *Monſieur D'ABLANCOURT*, ſo worthily eſteem'd by Ingenious Men; yet not without having an eye to, and continual comparing of it with the *Original Latin*; though I never thought it fitting to tye my ſelf too ſuperſtitiouſly to the Authors *Words*, but deem'd it ſufficient to expreſs his *Senſe*; which I have been very careful not to vary from in the leaſt. For I conceiv'd it my duty where I could not attain his *Graces* and *Ornaments*, at leaſt to ſpeak his *Mind*; and to give the *Subſtance* of his Arguments, where my poor ability could not reach to clothe them in ſo rich a *Dreſs*. For all whc h I challenge nothing but the READER's Acceptance, and

and where it needs, his Pardon; which might perhaps be an Encouragement to me, to attempt ſomething further in the like kind hereafter.

FAREWEL.

Marcus

Marcus Minucius Felix

HIS

OCTAVIUS;

OR, A

Vindication of CHRISTIANITY against PAGANISM.

WHEN I think of my dear *Octavius*, and reflect on those delightful minutes we have spent together, I feel such a pleasure, as if I were still enjoying those happy days; so deep an impression has his *Idea* left in my Mind, since my Eyes have lost the sight of him. And indeed 'tis not without cause, that I am so sensibly affected with the loss of so Excellent and Holy a Person, as he was;

seeing he always expres'd so great a love for me, that in our pastimes, as well as most weighty Affairs, we ever will'd and dislik'd the same things, as if one heart had been divided between us. And as he had formerly been the intimate Friend of my youthful Loves, and Companion with me in my Errors, so when those clouds were dispell'd, and I came out of the darkness of Ignorance into the light of Truth, he did not disdain to accept of my company, though indeed (which was the more glorious for him) he far outwent me. I say, as I was lately reflecting on all these things, I fixed my thoughts on that serious and important Discourse which he entertain'd, in my presence, with *Cæcilius*, whom by means thereof he brought from his vain Superstitions to the knowledge of the true Religion of *JESUS CHRIST*.

OCTAVIUS was come to *Rome*, partly upon account of business, chiefly, perhaps, to see me, for whose sake he made no difficulty of leaving his Family and Children in that tender age

age when they are the moſt lovely; I mean, by reaſon of their Innocence; when they begin to ſpeak half words, and when their broken and faltring ſpeech makes whatever they ſay extremely delightful. It is not to be expreſs'd with what a joy I was tranſported at this unexpected felicity, of meeting ſo good a Friend, whom of a long time I had not ſeen.

WHEN the firſt motions of this joyful ſurpriſal were a little over, after our being ſome days together, and telling one another our adventures, we determin'd to go to *Oſtia*; the Baths there, near the Sea, being very good for me, to dry up my humors, and the Vacation of the Vintage affording me leiſure for that retirement. It was at the time when the greateſt heats of the Summer begin to abate, and the ripening Fruits give notice that the Harveſt is at hand. Being arriv'd in this fair City, we went early in the morning to take a walk upon the Sea-ſhore, to enjoy the freſh air, which quickens the ſpirits, and imparts livelineſs to

the whole body, and where the Sands, in which the footſteps make ſo ſlight an impreſſion, do not tire the Walker, but ſuffer him without wearineſs to receive the benefit of a pleaſant and healthful Recreation. As we were thus walking on, *Cæcilius* who was in company with us, ſeeing an Image of *Serapis*, as we paſs'd by, did according to the Superſtition of the Vulgar, kiſs his hand to it, in token of worſhip and reverence. Whereupon *Octavius* turning to me, ſaid; Brother *Marcus*, you do not like a good man to ſuffer one, whom you daily converſe with, to remain in ſuch groſs blindneſs, as to ſtumble at ſtones in broad day-light, which though they be ſhap'd into ſome figure, and are perfum'd and crown'd, yet ſtill are nothing but ſtones. Indeed it concerns you, as well as him, not to let him go on in this Error.

WITH this kind of diſcourſe we paſs'd through the middle of the City, and drew towards the Sea-ſide, near a wide and open place, where we ſaw the waves gently beating the ſhore, and

and ſmoothly ſpreading the ſand, as if they had been fitting it on purpoſe for a walk. And as the Sea is never quite calm, even when the winds are ſtill, ſo though the waves were neither high nor foaming, yet in great curles they came rowling towards the ſhore. Thus we delightfully wander'd by the Sea-ſide, and beheld the waves coming and breaking themſelves at our feet, and then returning to be ſwallow'd up agãin in that vaſt Element, and keeping along the edge of the gently bending ſhore, with pleaſant ſtories we deceived the tedioufneſs of our journey: For *Octavius* entertained us with a Diſcourſe of Navigation, in ſo pleaſant a manner, that we could not grow weary either of walking, or hearing him. And that we might not go too far, we return'd back the ſame way we came; and being arriv'd at a place where Veſſels are dry-dock'd, we ſaw ſome little Boys vying with one another at an exerciſe of making ſhells to graze, as it were, upon the water. The Sport is this: They gather ſmall

shells on the shore, picking up such as are the most smooth and round; then stooping to the ground, with all their strength deliver them, so as they may but just raze the surface of the water; and he that makes them glide furthest, and gives the most bounds, does win the Game. Whilst *Octavius* and my self were looking on these Children, *Cæcilius* taking no diversion in their sport, nor any notice of the activity of these Youths, kept aloof thoughtful and melancholick, shewing by his clouded countenance that he had something in his mind that troubled him, insomuch that it prompted me to accost him with this discourse. How now? What is become of that gay and charming temper, which you are wont to have even amidst your most serious Affairs? Whereupon he reply'd, I will not conceal from you, that *Octavius* has affronted and vex'd me to the heart; for it seems that he does blame you, only to offend me, and accuse you of negligence, only to expose me as an ignorant and blockish Fellow. I am resolv'd

ſolv'd to ſeek my amends for this injury, and to have this matter diſcuſs'd between us in good earneſt. It's like he'l ſee then, that it is a more eaſy thing to talk of theſe matters with thoſe of his own Party, than fairly and orderly to debate them with Learned Men. Let us go and ſit down upon yonder ſtones that jet out into the Sea, and ſecure the Baths from the raging waves, where we may reſt our ſelves, and argue the Caſe more at leiſure. We went therefore and ſate down, they placing me between them both, not out of complement or reſpect to my Quality, (for Friendſhip either finds or makes all equal) but as a Judge and Moderator of their diſpute, that I might the better hear the reaſons of both Parties; and keep the two Diſputants aſunder. Then *Cæcilius* began thus: Brother *Marcus*, though you be already reſolved about the Things which are now controverted between us, ſince upon careful examination and tryal of both, you have left the *Service* of our *Gods*, and embraced *Chriſtianity*; yet

at present your mind should be so disposed, that you may hold the scales even, like an equal Judge inclining to neither Party; that so your Sentence may rather appear to be the effect of the force of our Arguments, than of your own preconceiv'd Opinion. Therefore if you'l sit down as a Stranger, who has no acquaintance or interest on either side, it will be no hard task to demonstrate to you, that all the things of this World are uncertain and doubtful, and that the knowledge we have of 'em, is rather Opinion than Certainty; so that I cannot but wonder when I see some Men so lazy, as rather inconsiderately to yield to the first Opinion that presents it self, than to be at the pains to search things to the bottom. It is indeed a thing to be lamented (and which puts one into a passion to think on't) to see some ignorant men, who have no manner of Learning, and do scarce throughly understand any of the ordinary Mechanick Arts, boldly to decide the highest and most important Matters in the World,

World, which have exercis'd the Wits of the *Philoſophers* of all Ages, and who after all, have never been able to come to a final determination of them. For Man's underſtanding is ſo little capable of ſuch tranſcendent knowledge, that we cannot apprehend even things that lye at our feet. And it ſeems to me a kind of impiety, to be ſo curious, as to ſound the ſecrets of *Providence*, and in our inquiries to reach after the heights of Heaven above, or to rifle the bowels of the Earth beneath. Happy therefore, and wiſe enough ſhould we be, if according to the ancient Oracle of Wiſdom, we could but know our ſelves, and keep our mind from this vexatious and unprofitable labour, and confine it within the bounds of Reaſon and its own mediocrity. And if notwithſtanding our creeping on the ground, as we do, we cannot hinder our ſelves from attempting to mount up to the Heavens, and to ſoar above the Stars; let us not at leaſt add this ſecond Error to the former, and fill the World with vain Opinions

nions and Fancies, on purpose to affright men. For whether the Principles of Things be certain Seeds, which by a Natural propensity have joyn'd and united themselves together; or that the Members of all this spacious Universe, have meerly by Chance been fram'd and settled in the orderly manner in which they now are; What reason is there why men should fancy a *God* Creator of the World? What, if we suppose the Fire to have kindled the Stars; and the matter whereof the Heavens are made, to have spread and sustain'd it self; that the Earth was poised by its own weight, and the Sea made out of the moisture which was drain'd from that heavy lump; What ground is there in all this for this Religion? for these Fears? What means all this Superstition? Pray what is Man, and all other Creatures in the World, but a mixture of Elements, which in a short time dissolve themselves, and return into their first Being, without the help of an overseer, workman, or disposer of all these Changes? Thus by a

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continual confluence of the fiery parts of matter, of which the Celeſtial Lights are made, we daily behold new Suns to ſhine: And by a like cauſe the Vapours and Exhalations of the Earth produce Clouds, which afterwards being condenſed, and by degrees carried upwards, do at laſt diſſolve themſelves into Rain, or elſe cauſe bluſtring Winds, ratling Hail, roaring Thunder, and dazling Lightning. Which is the reaſon alſo why theſe Meteors do caſually and indifferently diſcharge themſelves, ſometimes on the top of a Hill, ſometimes on a Tree, ſometimes upon Temples and Conſecrated places, ſometimes upon Palaces, ſometimes on ſuch as fear *God*, and ſometimes upon thoſe that contemn him. Shall I ſpeak of the variety and uncertainty of Storms and tempeſtuous weather, wherein it is eaſy to be obſerv'd, that without any choice or exception, all things here below are turn'd topſy-turvy? Don't we ſee both good and bad involv'd in the ſelf ſame ſhipwrack, without any diſtinction of Vice and Virtue;

Virtue; the guilty and innocent consum'd in one fire; and almost all confusedly perish in time of Plague, and in War the best many times are the first cut off? Nay, in time of Peace, Wickedness is not only upon equal terms with Virtue, but prefer'd and ador'd: So that when a man considereth the prosperity of the Wicked, he is at a loss what to think of them, and does not know whether he has more reason to detest their Crimes, or desire their happiness. Now if the World were govern'd by a Divine *Providence*, and the authority of a wise and powerful Being, surely *Phalaris* and *Dionysius* the *Tyrant* had never mounted a Throne; nor *Rutilius* and *Camillus* ever been banish'd, nor *Socrates* forc'd to take down the deadly draught. We see here Trees loaden with Fruits, Fields well stor'd with Corn, and Hills with Grapes, ready for Vintage, which promise a plentiful Harvest; and all on a suddain, this may be utterly spoil'd with rain, or destroy'd by a tempest. Surely it must be own'd, that either

either Truth lyes deep buried, and the ſecret ſprings and wheels of *Providence* are altogether unknown, or (which is the moſt probable) that *Chance* only governs the World without any Law or Order. And therefore ſince either the viciſſitudes and motions of *Nature* are uncertain, or we our ſelves certainly under the Dominion of *Fortune*, how much more reaſonable and juſt is it to retain the Doctrine of our Anceſtors, and adore the *Gods* which our Fathers have worſhipp'd, and in whoſe Service we have been brought up from our infancy, than to go about to judge of Things ſo far above our reach as the Deity is? And is it not better and ſafer to believe our firſt Fore-fathers. who living in an Age of great ſimplicity, and in the very infancy of the World, deſerv'd to have their Gods either eaſie and propitious, or exerciſing a gentle government like that of Kings? For indeed we ſee all the Towns, Provinces and Kingdoms of the World have ſome Religion or other, and peculiar Ceremonies,

monies, each worshipping their own *Country-Gods*; as the *Eleusinians* do *Ceres*; the *Phrygians*, *Cybele*; the *Epidaurians*, *Æsculapius*; the *Chaldeans*, *Bell*; the *Assyrians* and *Sydonians*, *Astarte*; the *Scythians*, *Diana*; the *Gauls*, *Mercurius*; and the *Romans*, *all* of *them* together; which is the reason why their Power is so greatly encreas'd, and themselves become Masters of the whole World, having carried their Dominion almost beyond the course of the *Sun*, and the bounds of the *Ocean:* For by the Religion and Valour of their Arms; by guarding their City with the Service of the *Gods*, Nunneries of *Vestals*, and other Chast *Votaries*, with a vast number of *Priests* and *Ceremonies*; by appeasing their angry *Gods*, when other Nations would have Blasphemed them, and even at that time when *Rome* was sackt, and had nothing left her but the *Capitol*; by adventuring (in celebratiug their *Mysteries*) to pass unarm'd through the Camp of their Enemies, whom they astonished and daunted with the bold daringness

daringneſs of their Zeal; by continuing ſtill to worſhip their vanquiſhed *Gods*, even at the very inſtant when their Enemies having taken their City, made 'em feel the inſolence which their Victory prompted them to; by ſearching for *Deities* throughout the World, to adore them and give them Temples at *Rome*; nay, beſides all this, by erecting Altars to unknown *Deities*, and the Souls of departed *Heroes*; And in a word, by worſhipping the *Gods* of all Nations, they are deſervedly become the Maſters of, and have given Laws to all Nations. Which Devotion of theirs hath ever been kept up amongſt 'em, and encreaſed more and more in proceſs of time: For age confers I don't know what of Sacredneſs upon Temples and Holy Things; inſomuch as the more ancient and unknown their Original is, the more are they reverenced. It is not therefore without reaſon, I confeſs (though I may be miſtaken) that our Fore-fathers did ſo much betake themſelves to *Divination*, by obſerving the flying and chattering

of

of Birds, and by consulting the entrails of Beasts; and did institute the Service of their *Gods*, and dedicate Temples to them. Do but look into the Histories and Records of past times, and you will find that all these Mysterious Ceremonies were ordain'd either to return thanks to the *Divine* Bounty, or to divert the stroak of his Wrath, or to appease the fury of it. Witness the *Mother* of the *Gods*, who at her coming into the City, made known the Chastity of a Lady, and deliver'd *Rome* from the fears of her Enemies. Witness the Statues of those two Brothers on Horse-back, which were erected in the same place where they shew'd themselves, when returning from the defeat of *Perses*, with their Horses out of breath and all in a soame, brought the news of the Victory, the very same day they had got it. Witness those Games which were set up anew, upon a Dream which an ordinary man had, that *Jupiter* was offended. Witness the *Decii*, who won the Battle by sacrificing their lives for the Service

Service of their Country. In fine, witneſs *Curtius*, that noble Youth, who leapt on Horſe-back into that yawning Deep, which open'd it ſelf in the midſt of *Rome*; and by devoting himſelf to appeaſe the Anger of the Gods, cloſed up that dreadful Abyſs. And indeed the contempt of *Divine* Bodings hath occaſion'd the preſence of the *Gods* more often than we could have wiſh'd for; which the River *Allia* (that unfortunate Name) ſufficiently teacheth us, as well as the Battle of *Claudius* and *Junius* againſt the *Carthaginians*, which was not ſo much a Fight, as a miſerable Shipwrack. The Lake *Thraſimenus* hath ſeen its waters ſtain'd and ſwoln with *Roman* Blood, becauſe a Conſul made light of the Verdict of the *Augurs*; as likewiſe at another time for ſome juſt impreeations which we ſlighted, we were made a Prey to the *Parthians*. But paſſing by things more remote, concerning the Birth of the *Gods*, and the Gifts and Preſents made to them; and omitting alſo the relations of the *Poets*, and thoſe *Ora-*

cles that have foretold things to come, leſt *Antiquity* ſhould ſeem too fabulous, do but caſt your Eyes upon theſe Temples, which at once are the City's Ornament and Defence, and you ſhall find them more Auguſt and Glorious, by reaſon of the *Divinities* which inhabit them, and are there ador'd, than by all the pomp of their Embelliſhments, or riches of their Gifts and Offerings. From thence it is that the *Prieſts* are inſpir'd with the knowledge of future Events, and teach us how to prevent dangers to come. Here they are inſtructed to heal the ſick, to give hope to the afflicted, ſuccour to the needy, comfort to the unhappy, and eaſe to all our pains. And whilſt we are taking our reſt, we oft ſee, hear, and acknowledge thoſe very *Gods*, whom in the day-time we impiouſly deny, diſown and forſwear. Since therefore it is agreed by all Nations, that there are *Gods*, though their Nature and Original be unknown, why ſhould we ſuffer thoſe bold and impudent men, who being puffed up with

I don't know what impious wiſdom, endeavour to weaken and deſtroy a belief which is no leſs uſeful and comfortable, than it is ancient and venerable? And though *Theodorus* the *Cyrenian*, or he that was before him (*viz. Diagoras Melius*) to whom *Antiquity* gave the Sirname of *Atheiſt*, have ſtrove to overthrow this Opinion, that they might extinguiſh all manner of Religion and Reverence of the *Gods*, and diſſolve the ſtrongeſt bond of Humane Society; yet ſhall their counterfeit Wiſdom, never paſs for Philoſophy in the eſteem and approbation of Wiſe and thinking Men. If the *Athenians* baniſh'd from their Country one *Protagoras*, becauſe he rais'd diſputes about the *Gods* (though he did it rather in a Philoſophical and inquiſitive, than profane way) and caus'd his Writings to be publickly burnt; ſhall we ſuffer men (pray give me leave in the heat of diſcourſe to ſpeak out my mind freely) I ſay, ſhall we ſuffer men of an unlawful, infamous and deſperate Faction, without fear of puniſh-

ment to attempt against the *Gods*; and gathering together a company of silly and ignorant people, especially Women, who by reason of the weakness and credulity of their Sex, are easily deceiv'd and impos'd upon; train them up to a wicked Confederacy, or rather Conspiracy; into which they are not initiated by any holy Rites, but by impious Crimes practis'd in their Night-Conventicles, Solemn Fasts, and horrid and inhumane Feasts? These are the people that sculk in the dark, and flee the light, who are mute in publick, and full of chat in their private Assemblies. They with horror and disdain look upon our Temples as polluted Graves; They spit at our *Gods*, deride our Ceremonies, and pity others, whilst themselves are most of all to be pitied. They slight the Dignities of Priesthood, and contemn the Sacred Purple, whilst themselves have scarce cloaths to cover their own nakedness; and out of a strange madness and unheard-of boldness, they make nothing of present torments,

whilst

whilſt they are ſtrangely fearful of uncertain future miſeries; Nay, the very fear of dying after Death makes them fearleſs of Death, ſo powerful an aſcendant groundleſs fears, and the falſe hopes wherewith they flatter and comfort themſelves, have got over their Spirits. And in the mean time, as Weeds ſpring faſteſt, and ill habits daily encreaſe more and more; ſo this pernicious and accurſed Sect every day waxing ſtronger and ſpreading it ſelf throughout the World, it is but reaſon that a timely care be taken for its total extirpation and ſuppreſſion. By ſecret ſigns and tokens they know one another, and their mutual love almoſt anticipates their knowledge. They make their Luſt a part of their Religion; and ſo much doth the fooliſh and mad Superſtition of theſe People glory in their crimes, that they promiſcuouſly call one another Brothers and Siſters, and by this ſeeming holy Compellation make filthy Inceſt of that which otherwiſe were but ſimple Fornication: Which Wickedneſs of theirs is ſo much

nois'd abroad in the World, that the truth thereof cannot well be queſtion'd; no more than that other report which goes of them, *viz.* That by a mad Superſtition they worſhip the Head of that vile Animal [an *Aſs*]: Which indeed is a ſort of Worſhip very ſuitable to their Lives and Manners. They are alſo ſaid to pay a great veneration to the Privy parts of their *Prieſts*, as if they meant to adore the *Genitals* of their Ghoſtly Fathers. Now whether theſe Reports be true or falſe, I will not take upon me abſolutely to determine. But their Nocturnal Ceremonies and conceal'd Devotions ſeem to be ſufficient Arguments to perſwade the truth of them; and they who tell us that they worſhip a Man who was crucified for his Villanies, and that the Wood of a Croſs conſtitutes a great part of their Devotion, do worthily attribute to them Altars ſuitable to their Crimes, by making them to adore what they deſerve. Moreover the Ceremony they obſerve upon admitting any to their Religion is no leſs horrible

horrible than notorious. A Child cover'd all over with Paſte (to conceal the Murther he is deſigned for) is ſet before the new *Proſelyte*, who, by their command, ſtrikes his knife many times into it, until the blood run down apace from all parts, which by them is as greedily ſuckt up; and this common Crime is made the Pledge and Surety for their Silence and Secrecy. Theſe are their Sacrifices, which are worſe than all Sacriledges. As to their Feaſts, they are but too well known; concerning which our *Cirthenſian* Orator tells us in his Speech, that on a certain day (ſolemnly appointed for that purpoſe) they aſſemble themſelves all together, both Men, Women, Children, Brothers, Siſters, and in a word, people of all Ages, Conditions and Sexes; and after they have eaten and drunk to exceſs, and that the heat of the Wine and Meats begins to kindle their blood and provoke their luſt, they caſt a morſel to a Dog, who is ty'd to a Candleſtick, ſo far out of his reach, that in ſtriving to leap at it, he overthrows the Candle-

ſtick, and puts out the Light. So that having thus rid themſelves of the only Witneſs of their infamous actions, and taking boldneſs from ſhameleſs Darkneſs, they confuſedly mix themſelves together, as it happens; and therefore though it may chance ſo, that they are not all Inceſtuous in deed, yet they are all of 'em ſo in will and deſign; ſince the Sin acted by any one of them is not only conſented to, but wiſh'd by the whole Company. Several other things of this nature there are, which I purpoſely omit, I having already produc'd but too many inſtances of their Errors. And indeed were there nothing elſe againſt them but that of their endeavouring to conceal ſo much their Myſteries in obſcurity, it would be an evident proof of the truth of all we ſay, or at leaſt of the greateſt part thereof. For why do they ſo induſtriouſly ſtrive to hide that which they worſhip? Men are not afraid to publiſh their honeſt actions; but ſuch as are unjuſt they ſeek to cover with ſilence and privacy. Why have they

they neither Altars nor Temples, nor any Images, at leaſt which are known? Why don't they ſpeak but in private holes and corners, whither they repair by ſtealth, if this their conceal'd Religion be not infamous and criminal? But pray, from whence, who, and where is this one only ſolitary and forſaken *God* of theirs, whom not one free Nation, no Kingdoms do worſhip, no not the *Romans* themſelves who have worſhipp'd all the *Gods* of the whole Univerſe? Among all the people in the World there is but that one miſerable Nation of the *Jews*, who have ſerved one *God* alone; and yet they did it too in a publick manner, with Temples, Altars, Rites and Sacrifices; and notwithſtanding the power of this *God* is ſo inconſiderable, that both himſelf and his People are now Captives to the *Romans*. But what ſtrange and wonderful things don't they invent? They aſſert, That to this *God*, whom they neither ſee, nor can demonſtrate, men's Lives and Actions are particularly known; That he hears their words, ſearcheth

their

their most secret thoughts, and is present every where; thereby making him troublesome, restless and curious, even to impudence; for he hath a hand in, or at least a knowledge of every thing; He is present every where, and leaves nothing unpried into. But how can this be? How can he possibly have an eye to every thing in particular, who has business in all places at once? Or how can he be sufficient for all, whilst he applies himself to every particular? Nor do they content themselves with all this; but they threaten all the World, and the Stars themselves with an universal Conflagration; as if any thing could alter that Eternal Order, which Nature her self has establish'd; the Elements break their Alliance, or the *Divine* Harmony of the *Spheres* be dissolv'd, for to destroy this wonderful *Fabrick*, which contains and surrounds us. To these they add several other Old Wives Fables: They tell us, That after Death their ashes and dust shall rise again; and (by I don't know what strange kind of persuasi-

on)

on) they ſtedfaſtly believe thoſe Errors they have invented, and fancy themſelves already riſen and born again: Which is a double madneſs and folly, to believe that the Heavens and Stars which we leave as we found them, ſhall periſh; and that Men, whom we ſee hourly dye and have an End, as they have had a Beginning, ſhall for ever abide. And as if Dead Bodies being kept from the flames, ſhould not by length and proceſs of time be turn'd into duſt and aſhes, they will not burn their Dead, and blame us becauſe we burn ours. Do you think that it matters any thing, whether they be conſum'd in the Earth or in the Sea, or devour'd by Fire or wild Beaſts? For if Dead Bodies have any ſenſe, any manner of Burial muſt needs be a torment to them; but if they have none, that way whereby they are ſooneſt conſum'd, is the beſt. Nevertheleſs being prepoſſeſt with this ridiculous opinion, they promiſe themſelves (as the Godly Party) an everlaſting happineſs after this Life; and threaten

threaten others (as being the Rebel Rout) with torments that shall have no end. I have many things to say here, to prove them worse than others; but I will not take pains to make it out, since I think it sufficiently done already. But were it granted that they are as righteous as others, is it not as a certain truth believ'd by most, That *Destiny* is the cause both of the good and evil, that we see in the World? Which is your judgment also. For as some impute all humane Actions to *Fate* and *Fortune*, so do you to *God*. Which is in effect to say, that you have not voluntarily embraced this Sect, but *God* has Elected you thereunto; So that thereby you make your *God* an unjust Judge, who does not punish the sinful, but the unfortunate. Pray tell me, shall you rise again without, or with a Body? and shall that Body be the same you have now, or another? If you say without a Body: For my part I don't believe there is either Life, Soul, or Sense without a Body. And how with a Body?

It

It cannot be your own; for that is already waſted. Shall it be another? Then it will be a new body, and not the old one repair'd. Beſides, ſo many Ages are paſt and gone; and yet who has ever been ſeen to riſe and come to Life again, though but for a ſmall time (as the *Poets* feign *Proteſilaus* did) that we might have ſome ground to believe this *Paradox?* Indeed theſe Stories are but *Chimæras* of a crack'd brain, and the vain comforts which *Poets* have invented and pleaſantly expreſs'd for their own and others diverſion. And theſe old Fables new vamp'd, your credulity entertains and applies them to your *God.* Why don't you ſuffer the experience of things preſent to teach you, at leaſt, how vain theſe your promiſes and hopes of the future are? Poor wretches! You might learn what will be your Fate after Death, by the miſeries of Life which you now endure. The moſt and the beſt of you (as you ſay your ſelves) are ready to ſtarve, being in want of all things neceſſary for this mortal Life, and under great

great troubles and miseries; which *God* suffers and takes no notice of; An evident proof, that he either will not, or can't afford you any relief; and by consequence is either impotent or unjust. Thou who flatterest thy self with an immortality after this Life, art thou not sensible of thy condition? Canst thou deny thy weakness, when thou trembleſt at dangers, when thou burnest in a Feaver, when thou art rack'd with pain? Miserable delusion! Not to own one's misery, even when one feels it! But to leave these common Matters; behold there are executions, punishments and torments that await you, and crosses, not to be ador'd by you, but endur'd; with fires and flames, which you own your selves afraid of, whilst you foretel and threaten them to others. Where is that *God* that can raise the Dead, but not relieve the Living? Are not the *Romans*, without the assistance of your *God*, become the Masters of the World, and of your selves too, whilst you in the mean time refrain from lawful

pleasures,

pleaſures, and entertain your ſullen humour with troubleſome fears and anxious thoughts? You are never ſeen at any publick Spectacles and Triumphs; nor do you ever frequent our ſolemn Feaſts and Combats in honour of our *Gods*. You abhor the Meats which *Prieſts* have touch'd, and are afraid to taſte the Wine that hath been preſented on our Altars; So that it ſeems you ſtand in ſome awe of thoſe very *Gods*, whom you deny. You wear no Garlands on your Heads, and reſerve your Ointments and Perfumes for the Dead; Nor do you ſo much as adorn the Graves of your deceaſed Friends with Chaplets. You look pale and trembling, and are indeed real Objects of pity; but it muſt be of the pity of our *Gods*, for yours take no notice of you. Miſerable Wretches! who deprive your ſelves of the enjoyments of this Life, and deceive your ſelves in the expectation of another. Therefore if you have any wiſdom or modeſty left, give over gazing upon the Stars, and ſearching into the *Deſtiny* of

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of the World; And think it enough to look to your own feet; especially for such rude and unlearned People as you are, who hardly understand matters of a Civil concernment, much less are able to discourse of *Divine* and *Heavenly* things. But if you have such an itch of *Philosophizing*, follow the Example of *Socrates* (you who think so highly of your selves) that was the Prince of Wisdom: All know the answer he was wont to make to those that ask'd him any Questions about Matters of *DIVINITY*. *What's above us* (said he) *does not concern us*. For which he merited the Praise of extraordinary Wisdom, from the mouth of the *Oracle* it self; and he himself was sensible, that it was not for his knowing all things, that *Apollo* had pronounced him the Wisest of all *Greece*; but because he had learn't this one thing, *That he knew nothing*. This therefore is the greatest Wisdom of all, for a Man to confess his own ignorance. Upon this bottom were founded the Opinions of *Arcesilas*, *Carneades* and several

ſeveral other *Philoſphers* of the *Ancient Academy*, who thought it ſafeſt not to determine any thing in Matters of any difficulty. And indeed this modeſt and doubtful way of *Philoſophizing* is the beſt, ſeeing it is wariness in the Ignorant, and wiſdom in the Learned. It was this, which gain'd ſo much admiration and eſteem to *Simonides*, whoſe admirable ſlowneſs and caution deſerves to be propos'd as an Example to be imitated by all Poſterity. For being ask'd of *Hiero* what his belief and opinion was concerning the *Gods*, he at firſt demanded a day to conſider of it: The next day after being queſtioned about the ſame thing, he deſir'd two days more; the third time he crav'd as many more; and ſo from that time forth he ſtill doubled the number: At which the King ſtanding amaz'd (not being able to gueſs the reaſon of ſo many delays) and preſſing him to anſwer the Queſtion without any further put-offs; *The more* (ſaid he) *O King, that I ſtudy and meditate of the Thing you enquir'd of me, the more*

obscure it grows. Thus (methinks) we ought to leave such things as are intricate and uncertain, undetermin'd, and not boldly give our Verdict in a Matter, wherein the Wisest Men are at a great loss, and use to suspend their Judgments; nor be too forward to resolve and decide Controversies, whilst the ablest and most Learned are yet in doubtful deliberation about them; seeing this is the ready way either to destroy all manner of Religion, or to introduce the most fulsome Superstition and intolerable Slavery.

WHEN *Cæcilius* had thus made an end, Well (said he, with a smiling countenance; for the earnestness of his Discourse had appeas'd his Anger) what to all this says our *Octavius* of the Race *Plautus* speaks of, *the chief of Bakers, and the meanest of Philosophers?* Soft (said I to him) you had better spare your braggs, and not begin your triumph till you have got the Victory; nor please your self too much with the fine Speech you have made. Remember that Truth, and not Vain-glory,

is the Thing we contend for. And indeed it is not your Diſcourſe that gives me the greateſt trouble (though I muſt confeſs that I was extreamly taken with it, becauſe it was both very witty and graced with admirable variety) but I am ſorry to ſee, that the probability of Things does change face, according to the abilities and eloquence of thoſe that diſcourſe them, and that the moſt evident truth often is obſcur'd by the weakneſs of thoſe who manage it. Men are apt to be carry'd away with an Eloquent Speech, and to aſſent to every thing that is plauſibly ſaid, and to be diverted from the conſideration of what's treated of, without diſcerning Truth from Falſhood, or conſidering that as a Paradox may ſometimes be true, ſo a likely thing often is falſe: And therefore the eaſier they are to believe the aſſertions of others, the oft'ner are they reprov'd and convinc'd by thoſe who look nearer into the Matter: So that being nettled at laſt to ſee themſelves deceiv'd at every turn, they caſt the

blame of their own rashness upon the doubtfulness and uncertainty of all things, and had rather condemn every thing and believe nothing at all, than concern themselves in Matters that are so doubtful, and lyable to mistake. 'Tis therefore our interest to have a care, lest this should make us have an aversion for all manner of Discourse and Conferences, or (which is worse) make us distast and hate the company of Men. For those who easily believe any thing, finding themselves frequently deceiv'd, by persons whom they before esteem'd honest and good Men, fall into another extreme, which is, That they suspect all the World, and mistrust even those in whom they have reason to repose the greatest confidence. Wherefore since it is so natural for every one to employ all their might in the vindication of their own Opinions, and since also in such Disputes as these, the one has commonly more Truth on his side, though obscure and unperceiv'd, and the other more Wit and Eloquence, even so far as some-

times

times to perſwade things that are not; it is our Duty to ponder and conſider of the Whole, with all the ſtrictneſs and exactneſs imaginable, that we may pick out, approve and receive what's good in it, contenting our ſelves to commend what is wittily ſaid, without believing it.

YOU tranſgreſs the bounds, and keep not the meaſures of an equal Judg (reply'd *Cæcilius*) by interrupting our Diſpute with a Diſcourſe that endeavours to weaken the ſtrength, and take away the credit of what I have ſaid; eſpecially ſeeing *Octavius* has all the Particulars of my Reaſoning whole and entire before him, and may anſwer and refute them, if he can: And for all your reflecting on my Diſcourſe, if I be not miſtaken, I have done nothing but what's for the intereſt of us both; having endeavour'd only to exhibite a *Compendium* of the Matters in Queſtion between us, to the end that what I have deliver'd, might be examin'd, rather by the force and ſoundneſs of Reaſon, than by any high and pompous

Eloquence. And we ought not any more take off our attention from considering the Things themselves (as you well observe) since our *Januarius* is now preparing and raising himself to take his turn, if we can but have the patience to hear him with silence.

I SHALL speak (said *Octavius*) as much to the purpose as I can. But we must first endeavour to wipe off all injuries, calumnies and reflections, and to dispel those clouds with the light of Truth. To begin therefore, I must first of all tell you plainly, That you have express'd so great an uncertainty about the things you spoke of, that I doubted whether you fail'd in point of Learning or Knowledge, or were blinded by Error. For sometimes you said that you believ'd there were *Gods*; and sometimes again, that you did not know, what to believe of 'em; as if you had a design by your ambiguous Expressions to avoid the dint of my Answer. But I can't think this of *Cæcilius*; These crafty tricks are beneath the greatness of his Wit, and the simplicity

plicity of his temper. But he does like thoſe, who knowing not the way, ſtop when it divides into many, and are at a loſs which to take, becauſe they cannot believe them all right, and dare not chuſe any one: In like manner he who hath no firm judgment of Truth, is doubtful and divided in his Opinion about it, according as the reaſons on either ſide do incline and ſway him by turns. Therefore it is no wonder if *Cæcilius* alſo be toſs'd to and fro by contrary Opinions. Which that he may no longer be, I will convince him of the Variety of his Errors, by repreſenting Truth to him which is but one, and ſo ſettle and eſtabliſh him for ever. And becauſe he takes it ſo heinouſly, that unlearned and poor ignorant people (as he calls us) ſhould maintain any Diſpute about *Divine* Matters; he muſt underſtand, that all Men are born reaſonable Creatures, without any diſtinction of Age, Quality or Sex, and owe not their Wiſdom to *Fortune*, but to *Nature*. Beſides, that *Philoſophers* and other re-

nowned Inventors of Arts and Sciences, were accounted but mean people, illiterate and poor, till their wisdom made them Famous; So true it is, that the Rich who idolize their Treasures, make more account of their Gold, than of Heaven; whereas such poor Fellows as we, have always been the Searchers-out of Wisdom and Teachers of it to others. Whereby we may plainly see, that Wit and Wealth do not always go together; neither is it so much the Effect of great Study and Industry, as an advantage of Nature. Men ought not therefore to quarrel, or be angry, when they see others make it their business to inquire into the truth of *Divine* Mysteries, and declare the understanding they have of them; seeing we ought not to regard so much the Authority or Quality of the Disputer, as the Weight and Truth of what is said. The strength of Reason appears most clearly, when the Discourse is stript of all external Ornaments and Flourishes, not painted and set off with an artificial Grace and Eloquence,

quence, but ſupported by Truth, which is the Rule of Right and Wrong. Not that I deny, for all that, what *Cæcilius* has given himſelf ſo much trouble to prove, *viz.* That Man ought to know himſelf, what he is, from whence, and for what end; Whether he be compounded of the Elements, or made up of Atoms; or rather fram'd, faſhion'd, and animated by *GOD* himſelf. But this we cannot reſolve without inquiring into the nature of the Univerſe, ſeeing both theſe things have ſo near a relation, and are ſo ſtraitly linked to one another, that we cannot rightly apprehend what Man is, without a diligent enquiry into the nature of the *Deity*; nor be able to manage the civil Affairs of this World, without being acquainted with the conſtitution of this great City of the Univerſe. And indeed it being this eſpecially, that makes us differ from Brutes, that whereas they are continually ſtooping downwards to the ground, looking no higher than their Food; we on the contrary, who have our Faces rais'd upwards

upwards to behold Heaven, and are endued with the use of Speech and Reason, which teaches us to acknowledge *GOD*, to perceive and imitate Him; we cannot without guilt shut our Eyes against this clear Light, which continually glares upon our Senses; it being the highest kind of Sacriledge to seek that on Earth, which is not to be found but in Heaven. And to speak the truth, one must be blind and senseless, to fancy all this great and admirable Fabrick of the World, to have been form'd by a fortuitous concourse of blind, senseless, and unthinking Atoms, rather than by the unsearchable Wisdom and immense Power of a *God*. For what can be more plain, evident or conspicuous (whether we lift up our Eyes to Heaven, or cast them down to the Earth) than that there is an inconceivably-powerful and wise Spirit, which does inspire, influence, move, cherish, and conduct whole Nature, and every part of it? Do but behold the Heavens; Let your thoughts out into the vastness of their Extension;

Extenſion; conſider the ſwiftneſs of their courſe; view them by night, when they ſparkle, and are all beſpangl'd with Stars; or by day, when they are all bright and reſplendent from the Sun; and you will eaſily diſcern the wonderful and *Divine* skill of the Supream Governour in the ordering and poizing of all theſe. Again, conſider how the Sun by his courſe through the Zodiack meaſures out the Year, and diſtinguiſhes its Seaſons, as the Moon does the Months by her increaſe and decreaſe. What ſhall I ſay of this continual viciſſitude of Light and Darkneſs, which affords us the agreeable and neceſſary enterchange of Labour and Reſt? But I muſt leave the further diſcourſe of the *Stars* to the *Aſtrologers*, whoſe proper buſineſs it is to inquire into their Virtues and influences, and who teach us, which of them rule the Winds, and inform the wary Mariner in the Art of Navigation; and which of them determine the time for Plowing and Reaping, and are the perpetual Almanack of the laborious Huſbandman.

bandman. From all which it is undeniably evident, that theſe Wonders could never have been created, fram'd and diſpos'd in that excellent Order, without the perfect Wiſdom of the Supream *Artiſt*; ſeeing we cannot ſo much as know or underſtand them, without a great ſagacity of mind and reaſon. What ſhall we ſay of that exact Diſpoſal of Time and Seaſons, wherein we do not know which we are to admire moſt, their Conſtancy or their Variety? How loudly do they proclaim their *Divine* Author, and Wiſe Director! The *Spring* is not more pleaſant by its fair Days and Flowers, than the heat of *Summer* is uſeful and advantagious to ripen the Fruits of the Earth; and the liberal Plenty of *Autumn* is not more joyful, than the wet and froſt of *Winter* is needful. Which Order might eaſily be diſturbed, if it were not diſpenſed by the ſteady Hand of *Power* and *Wiſdom*. Oh! the Wonders of *Providence!* which has allay'd the nipping froſts of *Winter*, and ſcorching heats of *Summer*, with the

inter-

intervening temperature of the *Spring* and *Autumn*; and that with ſuch exactneſs, that the change of theſe extreams of heat and cold, is ſo far from being intolerable, that it is even eaſie and delightful, giving us the pleaſure of variety, and yet ſliding gently and inſenſibly from one extremity to another. Caſt your eye upon the Sea, and to your amazement you ſhall ſee how the looſe Banks of Sand give a check to its proud and raging Waves. Conſider the wonderful ebbings and flowings of the *Ocean*; Behold the Springs whoſe waters flow continually; View the Rivers which purſue their uninterrupted courſe without ceaſing, and ever returning to that vaſt Deep, which is the Center of their Emanation: Take a proſpect of thoſe vaſt Woods and Forreſts, which deck and grace the face of the Earth; they are all fed from its bowels, and yet the Earth is never the leſs. What ſhall I ſay of that pleaſant and uſeful diſpoſal of the ſteepneſs of Mountains, the riſings of Hills, the vaſt extenſion of Plains? Or what ſhall

I say of such numberless numbers of Creatures, who are (each of them) severally furnish'd with their peculiar Weapons of defence; some are armed with horns, others fenced with teeth; some strength'ned with hoofs, others sharp'ned and edged with claws; some appointed with stings and spurs, others defended with a prickly and unaccessible skin; whilst others again secure themselves by the lightness of their heels, or swiftness of their wings; *Nature* having bestow'd on every one of them either strength or cunning for their own defence? But above all, the perfection and beauty of the Shape of *Man*, proclaims and owns *GOD* to have been the *Artist* that fram'd it. His upright Stature, his rais'd Countenance, in the upper part whereof the eyes are posted as on a Watch-tower, and where all the other Senses have their several Stations and Quarters allotted them, as in a Castle or Citadel. We should never have done in going about to treat in particular of all these Wonders: There is not one part in Man, which

which is not ornamental and graceful, as well as neceſſary: And what is yet more admirable is, That the ſame Figure which is common to us all, is diverſified by ſuch an infinite variety of Features in each of us, that as there is a likeneſs in all, ſo there is in every one ſomething that makes him unlike to another. Beſides, how wonderful is the manner of our Birth? How ſtrong and prevalent the deſire of begetting our Like? Upon whom can you father theſe Wonders but upon *GOD* alone, who ſwells the breaſts with milk, againſt the time the Infant breaks his Priſon, and comes to breath the free and open Air, ſuiting their nice tenderneſs with a proportionate delicate nouriſhment? Nor do's this bountiful *GOD* content himſelf to take a general care of the Univerſe, but provides alſo for each part of it. What *Great Britain* wants of the heat of the Sun, is made up by the warm Vapours which ariſe from the Sea that ſurrounds it. The overflowing of the River *Nilus* ſerves *Egypt* inſtead of Rain. *Euphrates* makes *Meſopotamia* fruitful, and the

the River *Indus* is ſaid both to ſow and water thoſe *Eaſtern* Parts. If perchance you ſhould come into a houſe, and there find all the Rooms richly furniſhed, beautified and adorned, would you not without the leaſt heſitancy conclude, That there is ſome Lord and Owner of it, who is far better than all this rich and glorious Furniture; ſo likewiſe in this ſtately Palace of the World, when you take a view of Heaven and Earth, and that *Providence*, *Order* and *Law*, which diſpenſeth and directs all things in them, doubt, if you can, that there is a Lord and Father of this great Family, whoſe Glory far tranſcends that of the Sun, Moon and Stars, and who is more beautiful than the moſt lovely part of it. But perhaps, ſince there is no doubt whether there be a *Providence* or not, you may think it a Queſtion whether there be but one or many, that have a hand in the adminiſtration of this Celeſtial Government, it will not be a hard matter to fix this your incertainty, if you will but attentively conſider the Kingdoms

doms of the Earth, which are but ſo many Copies of the One Heavenly Original Empire. When did ever a Monarch either admit of a Partner in his Soveraignty, in full truſt and confidence, or lay him aſide without blood? I omit ſpeaking of the *Perſians*, who refer'd the choice of their Prince to the neighing of an Horſe; and purpoſely paſs-by that old Story of the *Theban* Brothers. All the World knows what diſſenſion there aroſe between two Twins, which of them ſhould be King over a Company of Shepherds, and their poor Cottages. The Wars of *Cæſar* and *Pompey* have ſpread themſelves over the whole World, and the Fortune of ſo vaſt an Empire was not big enough to ſatisfie the ambition of two ſo nearly ally'd, as Father and Son-in-Law: You may from theſe inſtances eaſily judge of the reſt. The Bees can ſuffer no more than one King; Flocks follow one Leader, and every Herd has its own Ruler: And can you imagine the Supreme *Power* of Heaven to be divided, and that the Soveraign-

ty of that only true and *Divine* Monarchy is ſhared amongſt many? Eſpecially when you conſider, that *GOD*, the Father of all things, has neither Beginning nor End; and as he gives Beginning to all other things, ſo an Eternity and perpetuity of Being to himſelf. Who before this World was made, was a World to Himſelf; who by his Word commanded all things into Being, governs them by his Wiſdom, and perfects them by his Power. He cannot be ſeen, becauſe he is more bright and glorious than our ſight can endure to behold: Neither can He be comprehended, being greater than our minds, infinite, immenſe and only known to Himſelf; what He is indeed, our breaſts are too narrow to conceive; and we can never form a worthy notion of Him, but when we own Him Ineſtimable and Incomprehenſible. May I ſpeak what I think: Whoſoever fancies he knows the Greatneſs of *GOD*, has already leſſen'd it; and therefore he who would not leſſen it, muſt not pretend to know it. Neither do thou

enquire

enquire after his Name; His Name is *GOD*. 'Tis then we ſtand in need of Names, when we are to divide a multitude into particulars, by their diſtinguiſhing Titles, and proper appellations. But *GOD* being alone and by himſelf, the Name of *GOD* muſt wholly belong to Him, and to none elſe: For if I call Him Father, you'l be apt to think Him an Earthly One; if I call Him King, you'l fancy Him a Worldly Prince; if I call Him Lord, you'l apprehend Him Mortal. Abſtract but theſe additions of Names from our groſs imagination, and you'l ſee Him in his own Brightneſs and Glory. Beſides, in this I have the general aſſent of all Men, concurring with me. Mind the Common-people; When they lift up their hands to Heaven, whom have they in their mouths but *GOD*? Their ordinary Saying is, *GOD is great*, *GOD is true*; and ever and anon [*If it pleaſes GOD:*] Which Words, though they contain the Confeſſion of a *Chriſtian*, yet are as well the Voice of *Nature* in the Common People.

Yea those who will have *Jupiter* to be the Soveraign of the Universe, do only mistake in the Name; but agree with us in the Thing it self, That there is but One only *Power*. The *Poets* also in their Verses celebrate *One Father both of the Gods and Men*; and say, *That the Minds and Thoughts of Men are such as GOD every day puts into them.* And what shall we say of *Virgil?* Does not he speak yet more clearly and more near to Truth, when he saith, *That in the beginning there was a Spirit, which inwardly cherished and foster'd both Heaven and Earth; and that all the Parts of them were actuated by a Mind infused throughout the Whole; and that from thence, Men and all other Creatures derive their Original?* The same *Prince* of *Poets* calls in another place this Mind and Spirit *GOD*, as where he saith, that *GOD is diffused throughout the vast Extent of the Earth and Seas, and of the high Heaven; and that from Him, Men and Beasts, Rain and Lightning do proceed.* And what do we say else, but that *GOD*

is

is an Eternal Mind, Reaſon and Spirit? Let us take a view, if you pleaſe, of the Opinions of *Philoſophers*, and you will find that though they ſeem diverſe, yet they all agree in this Matter. And omitting thoſe rude and primitive Men, who by their Sayings purchaſed the Name of *Sages*; *Thales* the *Mileſian*, who was before them all, and who firſt maintain'd any Diſpute concerning Celeſtial Things, held that Water was the Original Matter of all things, and that *GOD* was that Mind, or Underſtanding Spirit, who fram'd them out of it: Which is certainly a more profound and ſublime Account concerning the Water, and its actuating Spirit, than could proceed from the underſtanding of Man, without the aſſiſtance of *Divine* Revelation. Thus you plainly ſee that the Opinion of the firſt of *Philoſophers*, does entirely concur with ours. After him *Anaximenes* and *Diogenes Apolloniates* make God to be Air, but Immenſe and Infinite, and in aſcribing theſe perfections to the Divinity, they alſo conſent with

us. *Anaxagoras* was of opinion, that *GOD* was an Infinite Spirit, containing and moving all things. *Pythagoras* calls Him a Mind penetrating all things and diffus'd through the Universe, taking care of, and giving Life to all the Creatures therein. *Zenophanes* affirms, That *GOD* is an Animated Infinity, or a Spirit joyn'd with Infinite Matter. *Antisthenes* declar'd, That there were several *Gods*, belonging to several Countries; but that there was but *One* Principal and Soveraign amongst them all, who was *GOD* by Nature. *Speusippus* was of opinion that *GOD* was nothing else but a Natural *Power*, quick'ning and governing all things. Yea, and does not *Democritus* himself (though he was the first Inventor of Atoms) often call *Nature*, which is the Former of all *Ideas* and Understanding, *GOD*; *Strato* calls Him *Nature*; And even *Epicurus*, who either believed that there were no *Gods*; or if there were, that they were idle, and without any concern about the things of this World;

World; yet ſets *Nature* above them. As for *Ariſtotle*, though he ſeem ſometimes divided in his thoughts, about this Matter; yet he poſitively aſſerts *One* Soveraign Power: For ſometimes he ſaith, That an Underſtanding Spirit is *GOD*; ſometimes, that the World is *GOD*; and then again, he will have *GOD* to govern the World. *Heraclides* of *Pontus* aſſerts *GOD* to be a *Divine* Spirit, but with ſome incertainty; For ſometimes he attributes the Supremacy to the *Divine* Spirit, and ſometimes to the World it ſelf. *Theophraſtus*, *Zeno*, *Chryſippus* and *Cleanthes* do likewiſe vary in their Opinions; Yet all of them at laſt agree in One *Providence*, which ſuperintends the Whole. For *Cleanthes* ſometimes affirms *GOD* to be a Spirit; ſometimes, that He is an Æthereal Fire; but moſt frequently calls Him, Reaſon. His Maſter *Zeno* holds a *Natural* and *Eternal* Law, and ſometimes *Fire*, and ſometimes *Reaſon*, to be the firſt *Cauſe* of all *things*. He alſo evidently reproves and convinceth the common Error about the *Gods*, by ſhewing that *Juno* is no-

nothing but the Air, *Jupiter* Heaven, *Neptune* the Sea, and *Vulcan* the Fire; And that many of their other *Gods* are but the Elements dreſs'd up in other Names. *Chryſippus* is much of the ſame Opinion; for with him, ſometimes a *Divine* Power and a *Rational* Nature is *GOD*, and at other times the World, and a fatal Neceſſity; and imitates *Zeno* in his interpreting the Fables of the *Gods*, which are found in *Homer*, *Heſiod*, and *Orpheus*. In like manner *Diogenes* the *Babylonian* was us'd in his Diſcourſes to declare, That *Jupiter*'s Brain being with child and deliver'd of *Minerva*, and other like Stories, were not an account of the true Original of their *Gods*, but of ſome other things couch'd under thoſe Fables. *Xenophon* the Diſciple of *Socrates*, holds, That the ſhape of the true *GOD* cannot be ſeen, and conſequently is not to be ſearcht after. *Ariſto* of the Iſle of *Chios*, ſays, That he is altogether incomprehenſible: Both which *Philoſophers*, had doubtleſs a right ſenſe of the *Divine* Majeſty,

in

in that they deſpair'd of ever fully underſtanding Him. As for *Plato*, he does more openly and clearly ſpeak of *GOD*, and does leſs miſtake, both as to the Name and the Thing it ſelf; and his Diſcourſes might have been accounted altogether Heavenly, but that they are here and there blemiſh'd and tainted with his Politicks. In his *Timæus* he calls *GOD* by his Own Name, and declares Him to be the Father of this Univerſe, the Creator of the Soul, and the Architect of Heaven and Earth; who by reaſon of his ſuperlative and incomprehenſible Power and Majeſty, is hard to be found, and when found, cannot poſſibly be expreſs'd and declar'd: Which are, in a manner, the very ſame things which we ſay; for we alſo know *GOD*, and own Him to be the Parent of the World; but unleſs we be demanded, we do not ſpeak publickly of Him.

THUS I have rehears'd the Opinions of almoſt all the *Philoſophers*, whoſe glory it is, that they have all pointed at *One* and the ſame *GOD*, though

though under various Names; insomuch as it would make a Man think, either that our *Christians* now are *Philosophers*, or that the ancient *Philosophers* were *Christians*. Now if it be granted that *Providence* rules the World, and is govern'd by the Will and Counsel of the *One* only *GOD*; then ought not we to suffer our selves to be impos'd upon with the silly Fables of *Antiquity*, which are both repugnant to Reason, and condemn'd by the *Philosophers* of ancient Times. Our Fathers indeed were so credulous, as to believe things altogether monstrous and inconsistant, as a *Scylla* with several Bodies, a *Chimæra* with many shapes, an *Hydra* that receiv'd a new life from his happy Wounds, and *Centaures*, which were Horse and Man united and growing together. In short, they very readily believ'd whatever any one was pleas'd to feign or fancy; as Men's being metamorphos'd into Birds; Beasts into Men, and again Men into Flowers and Trees; with so many other fabulous things, which

which, had they ever been, would happen ſtill; but becauſe they cannot be, are hereby ſufficiently demonſtrated never to have been. Their Opinions concerning the *Gods* were likewiſe full of inconſiderate credulity and ignorant ſimplicity; for by giving Religious Worſhip to their Kings, and deſiring by Pictures and Statues to preſerve their memory, after their Death, they at laſt made a Religious Ceremony of that which at firſt was only intended to comfort themſelves for the loſs of them. For before the World was open'd by *Commerce* and *Trade*, and that *Nations* had mixt their *Cuſtoms* and *Ceremonies* together, every one of them ador'd their firſt Founder, or Famous Leader, or ſome Queen Chaſt, and valiant above her Sex; or an Inventor of ſome uſeful and neceſſary Art or Calling; as conſidering that the Memory of ſuch Renowned Perſons, well-deſerved to be preſerv'd by them; ſince by this means they at once gave a reward to the Virtue of the Deceaſed, and an example to Poſterity.

Read

Read the Writings of Wise-men, and particularly of the *Stoicks*, and you will acknowledge with me, that Men have been worship'd as *Gods*, either for their good Deeds, or their Dignity. *Euhemerus* gives us an exact account of their Birth, Countries and Names, as also the several Places where they were buryed; particularly he instanceth in *Jupiter* call'd *Dictæus*, from the Mountain *Dictæ* in *Candia*, where he was nurs'd; and *Apollo* nam'd *Delphicus*, from the City *Delphos* in *Phocis*, a Province of *Greece*; and *Isis*, who had the Sirname of *Pharia*, from the Island *Pharos* in *Egypt*; and *Ceres*, who was styl'd *Eleusina*, from the City *Eleusis* in *Achaia*, where she was more particularly worship'd. *Prodicus* tells us, that they were reckon'd among the *Gods*, who by rambling through the World, were the first Inventors of Husbandry, and by this means became useful to Mankind. And *Perseus* discourseth much at the same rate; adding, that it was from this ground, that the Names of the Inventors were bestow'd

ſtow'd upon the things invented by them, as appears by that Comical Expreſſion [*Without* Ceres *and* Bacchus, Venus *is a cold*] Which in other terms is no more than this, That *without good Meat and Drink Luſt languiſheth. Alexander* the Great in a famous Treatiſe which he writes to his Mother, tells her, That the dread of his Power had ſo far wrought upon a Prieſt, as to make him diſcover to him this great Secret and Myſtery, that the *Gods* were but Men. In which Diſcourſe he makes *Vulcan* the firſt of all the *Gods*, and after him the Race of *Jupiter*. Conſider the Story of *Iſis*, and the ſcatter'd members and empty Tomb of thy *Serapis* or *Oſiris*; and laſtly, their Religious Rites and Myſteries, and you'l find them made up of the diſmal Events, Deaths, Funerals, Mourning and Wailings of theſe caitive *Gods Iſis* in company of the *Dog's-Head-Idol*, and her bald *Prieſts*, mourns for, laments and ſeeks her loſt Son, and her miſerable Worſhippers beat their breaſts, to expreſs and imitate the ſorrow of this unhappy

happy Mother; and soon after you see *Isis* by and by overjoy'd for having found her Little-One; her *Priests* are merry, and the *Dog*'s snout triumphs for the feat he has done in finding him. Thus they fail not punctually every year to lose what they have found, and then to find again what they have lost. Now I pray you, what can be more ridiculous, than to bewail that which we worship, or to worship that which we bewail? And yet such fopperies as these, which formerly were the Religion of the *Egyptians*, are now (forsooth) become the Devotions of the *Romans*. *Ceres* with lighted torches in her hands, and Serpents twisting about them, seeks her Daughter *Proserpina*, full of languishing care and trouble, who having stray'd too far, was stoln away and ravish'd by *Pluto*. This is the sum and substance of the *Eleusinian* Mysteries: And the Rites used in the Worship of *Jupiter*, are no less ridiculous. He is suckled by a She-goat, for want of a better Nurse, and the poor Infant is stoln away from his

his Father, for fear he ſhould devour him; the *Corybantes* in the mean while ſoundly plying their Cymbals, to drown the cryes of the Bantling, from coming to the ears of his more than inhumane Father. I am aſham'd to relate the Account they give of *Cybele*, how ſhe gelded *Atys*, and made him an Eunuch-God, becauſe ſhe could not tempt him to commit Adultery with her, who was old and ugly, having been the Mother of ſo many *Gods*. And therefore, anſwerably to this Story, her *Prieſts* voluntarily geld themſelves, to the end they might be capable of that Dignity. I leave you to judge, whether theſe be not real miſeries, rather than Religious Myſteries. Come we now to ſpeak of the goodly form, meen and accoutrements of your *Gods*; than which, what can be more ſhameful and ridiculous? *Vulcan* is a limping crazy *God*. *Apollo*, though he has liv'd ſo many Ages, is ſtill a beardleſs Boy; whereas his Son *Æſculapius* has a fair and comely Beard. *Neptune*'s Eyes are blue;

Minerva's

Minerva's gray; *Juno* has Ox-Eyes; *Pan*'s Feet are garnish'd with claws; *Saturn*'s are charg'd with fetters, and *Mercury*'s fledg'd with Wings. *Janus* has two faces, as if he would go backward and forward at once. *Diana* the Huntress has her Garments tuck'd up to her thighs; but She at *Ephesus*, is in a manner made up all of paps: As she is the Goddess of Hell, they give her three Heads, and good store of Arms and Hands. Yea, your *Jupiter* himself sometimes has a Beard of much gravity, and at other times has a Chin as bare as my hand. When he has the Sirname of *Hammon*, he wears horns; when that of *Capitolinus*, he is arm'd with Thunder-bolts; when that of *Latiaris*, he is all besmear'd with blood; and when that of *Feretrius*, he is very still and quiet. And not to go over the many several *Jupiters*, there being as many Monsters of him, as there are Names. *Erigone* hangs her self; and the Merit of Self-murther hath advanc'd her to shine a perpetual Virgin among the Stars. *Castor* and *Pollux*

lux dye and live by turns. *Æsculapius* is struck down with a Thunderbolt, that with the greater Ceremony he may rise up a *God*: And *Hercules* must burn himself upon Mount *Oeta*, to get rid of his Humanity. These are the fine Stories, which we learn from our ignorant Fore-fathers; and, what is worse, make them the subject of our Studies, and a great piece of Learning. In these the *Poets* excel all others, and have by their Authority done vast prejudice to the Truth; So that *Plato* was much in the right, when he banish'd *Homer* (that renown'd, celebrated and crown'd *Poet*) out of his Commonwealth. For it is he chiefly, who in his Poem of the *Trojan* Wars, has made a mock of the *Gods*, by mingling them so familiarly in the actions and affairs of Men. He brings them in fighting together; He wounds *Venus*; He fetters and binds *Mars*, wounds him and puts him to flight: He make *Briareus* to rescue *Jupiter* out of the hands of the rest of the *Gods*, when they were conspiring to bind him to his good behaviour;

and represents him lamenting the death of his Son *Sarpedon*, as not being able to prevent it. He describes him embracing his *Juno* with more heat, than he us'd to do his belov'd Mistresses, being inflam'd with *Venus*'s Girdle. *Hercules* is made a Scavenger, and cleanseth Stables. *Apollo* turns Cow-herd to *Admetus*. *Neptune* binds himself as a Day-labourer to *Laomedon*, to build up the Walls of *Troy*, and is so unhappy withal, as not to be paid for his drudgery. *Æneas*'s Armour, and *Jupiter*'s Thunder-bolt are both hammer'd out upon one and the same Anvil; as if Heaven and its Thunders had not been long before *Jupiter* was born in *Crete*; or as if the *Cyclopses* could have made those affrighting flashes, which *Jupiter* himself could not choose but be afraid of. What shall I say of *Mars* and *Venus*, being caught in the very Fact of Adultery; or of *Jupiter*'s abominable filthiness with *Ganymedes*, whom he translated into Heaven? All which Fables were invented on purpose to authorize the faults and vices of Men. And it

is with thoſe and ſuch like pleaſing Fictions and Lyes, that the Minds of Youth are corrupted; and being inſtill'd into them in their tender years, grow up with them to Manhood; So that (which is to be lamented) in their very old Age their Minds continue tainted with theſe ſottiſh Fancies; And yet the truth of theſe Matters, is moſt plain and evident to thoſe who will take the pains to enquire into it. All the Antient Writers (whether *Greek* or *Roman*) do unanimouſly aſſert, that *Saturn*, the firſt of the goodly Generation of *Gods*, was but a Man. This, *Nepos* and *Craſſus* do affirm in their Hiſtory; and *Thallus* and *Diodorus* relate the ſame thing; *viz.* That this *Saturn* for fear of falling into his Son's hands, fled out of *Greece* into *Italy*, where *Janus* receiv'd him into his houſe; and being a *Grecian*, full of ingenuity, and inſtructed in Arts and Sciences, taught thoſe barbarous people ſeveral things; as the forming of the Letters of the Alphabet; coining of Money, and

making diverſe ſorts of uſeful Inſtruments: He call'd the Country *Latium*, as if he had ſaid, an *Hiding-place*, becauſe he had found there a ſafe retreat to hide and conceal himſelf from the attempts of his Son; and to the end he might have his Memory preſerv'd, he call'd the City from his own Name *Saturnia*; as *Janus* call'd the City built upon the Hill *Janniculus*, by that Name, to reſcue his own from oblivion. You ſee then plainly, that *Saturn* was a Man; for he was fain to flee and hide himſelf; and was the Father, as well as the Son, of a Man. And whereas they call'd him the Son of Heaven and Earth, it was only becauſe his Original and Parentage were unknown to the *Italians*; as we are wont to ſay of thoſe that come unexpectedly upon us, that they are dropt from the Skies; and of ſuch whoſe birth is mean and obſcure, that they are the Sons of the Earth. As for *Jupiter*, he Reign'd in *Crete*, after he had baniſh'd his Father from that Iſland; there he begot Children, and there

there he was buried: And at this very day they ſhew the Cave which bears his Name, and point you to the Grave where he was interred; yea, and the very Ceremonies they uſe in his Worſhip, declare him to have been a Man. It would be to no purpoſe to inſiſt on particulars, and to recount his whole *Genealogy:* It is enough that we have prov'd the Father was Mortal, to convince that the ſame Quality was conveigh'd to all his Poſterity; except you ſuppoſe that they became *Gods* after their Death; as by the Perjury of *Proculus*, *Romulus* was rank'd among the Number of the *Gods*; or as *Juba*, by the unanimous conſent and deſire of the *Africans*, was made a *God*; and as other Kings were Deifi'd by their Subjects, not becauſe they really believ'd them to be *Gods*, but to give them a more honourable diſcharge from their Soveraignty. Beſides, this extravagant Honour is confer'd upon them againſt their Wills; they deſire to continue Men as they are, and are afraid of being Deify'd; and though

old, are not at all ambitious of that Glory. Wherefore we are not to look for *Gods* among those that dye, because the *Gods* are Immortal; nor among those who are born, because they are likewise obnoxious to Death. *That* only deserves the Name of a *Deity* which hath neither Beginning nor End. For if *Gods* were ever born, why are they not so still, except you will say, that now *Jupiter* is too old, and *Juno* past Child-bearing; or that they are of the humour of *Minerva*, who chose to be an old Maid, rather than a Mother? Or indeed have not those pretended *Deities* ceased to procreate, because Men have ceased to believe such Stories? Moreover, if the *Gods* could beget Children, and those Children must needs be Immortal, we should already have had more *Gods* than Men; So that by this time the Heavens would not contain them, nor the Air hold them, nor the Earth bear the vast increase of them. Let us therefore make no difficulty to affirm them to have been Men, of whose Birth

Birth and Death we are ſo fully aſſur'd. Neither need any be far to ſeek for a reaſon why the common people, notwithſtanding all this, do adore and worſhip theſe Conſecrated Images; their fooliſh Minds being decoy'd and allur'd by the Curioſity of thoſe Maſterpieces of Art, their Eyes dazled with the luſtre of the Gold, and the brightneſs of the Silver, and poliſh'd whiteneſs of the Ivory. But if any body will take time to conſider how theſe Figures are made, and with what Inſtruments they are carv'd and fram'd, he will bluſh at his ſtanding in awe of a Material, that has been ſo abus'd, cut and mangled by the Work-man, before he could make a *God* of it. For if this *God* be of Wood, it may be it is the remnant of a funeral Pile, or Gallows; which they under-prop, cut, plane and make ſmooth. If it be of Silver or Braſs, it may poſſibly be made of an old Kettle, or ſomething worſe; (as it hath often happen'd to one of the Kings of *Egypt*) and then it is molten, beaten, hammer'd and fa-

shion'd on an Anvil; and if of Stone, hew'd, wrought and polish'd (it may be) by some debauch'd and wicked Fellow. Yet is not the *God*, in the least, sensible of all these tortures and indignities, offer'd to him at his Birth, no more than he is afterwards of the Honour, which accrues to him by your Consecration and Worship; except you will say, that this Stone, Wood or Silver is not yet a *God*. But pray when is it, that the Divinity of it commences? Behold! it is melted, fashion'd and grav'd; but it is not a *God* yet: It is solder'd, put together and set up; yet still it is no *God*: At last it is adorn'd, consecrated and worship'd; and then at last with much adoe it is a *God*, when it hath pleas'd vain Man thus to dedicate it. But how much more truly do the most contemptible of Animals and Insects, judge your *Gods!* The Mice, Swallows and Kites know very well, that they have no sense at all; they tread and pearch upon them, and were they not driven away by you, they would build

build their Neſts in their very Mouths; the Spiders cover their faces with their Cobwebs, and make uſe of their heads to faſten their threads at. You wipe, cleanſe and bruſh them, and protect the *Gods*, which your ſelves have made, and yet pretend to fear them. And all this while you don't conſider that *GOD* muſt be known by you, before you can worſhip Him, and inconſiderately comply with your Fathers Opinions, and chooſe rather to follow others in their Errors, than credit your own Judgments; and in a word, know not what that is for which you have ſuch an awe and reverence. Thus by hallowing of *Gold* and *Silver*, you have conſecrated *Avarice*; thus your vain Images come to be ſtamp'd with the imaginary ſhape of a *Deity*; thus the *Roman* Superſtition had its riſe, and that vaſt number of *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, wherein there are ſo many which are ſilly and ridiculous, and ſo many which deſerve pity and compaſſion. Some run about the Streets ſtark naked in the ſharpeſt cold

cold of Winter; others wear fools-caps, and carry about antick ſhields in their hands; others lance their own skins, and lead their blind *Gods* a begging about the ſtreets. They have ſome Temples which they may not viſit but once a year, and others which none may ever enter but the *Prieſts* alone: Again, they have ſome that are ſhut up from Women, and others prohibited to Men. They have ſome *Ceremonies*, at which a Slave is not permitted to aſſiſt, without a great crime. Some of your Statues may not be crown'd but by the hands of a Woman, who hath known but one Man; others again, only by ſuch as have had to do with many; and with great devotion you ſearch for the moſt lewd and common Harlot that is to be found, to officiate at your Holy-things. What ſhall we ſay of thoſe, who ſhed their own blood for a Drink-Offering, and by wounding themſelves, think to procure the favour of the *Gods*. Were it not better for them to be *Prophane*, than to be thus *Religious*?

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that made them dreadful to their Neighbours, and laid the first Foundation of their Government? For their Country being a Sanctuary and Place of Refuge for all sorts of Criminals, a great number of Thieves, Traitors, Murtherers, Sacrilegious and Incestuous persons were soon gather'd together; and to the end, that he who was their great Captain-General, might excel them all in *Villany*, as he did in *Dignity*, he kill'd his own Brother. These were the auspicious beginnings of this Holy City. Soon after, contrary to the Law of Nature, they steal away Maids already promised, yea betrothed, and Married Women too, from their own Husbands, and force and abuse them; and defend their Crime by warring against their Fathers-in-law, and shedding the blood of their nearest Allies: Than which, what can be thought of more prodigious, more barbarous and as, they presum'd, safe in the confidence of their wickedness? Their next work is, to drive their Neighbours out of their own Countries;

tries; to deſtroy their Cities, rob their Churches, and defile their Altars; carry them into Captivity, and enrich themſelves by Crimes, and the ſpoils and ruine of others. Theſe were the Maxims and Practice both of *Romulus* and his Succeſſors; So that whatever they have, poſſeſs, and worſhip, is all the purchaſe of bold Robbery. Their Temples are built and adorn'd with the ſpoils they have taken in War, that is, with the ruine of Cities, pillage of *Gods* and *Temples*, and ſlaughter of their *Prieſts*. What an inſolent piece of mockery is this, to eſtabliſh thoſe Religious *Rites*, you have ſo horribly prophan'd, and to worſhip thoſe *Gods*, who were once your Captives? For to pay Adoration to that which you have taken in War, is not ſo much a conſecrating of *Deities*, as an hallowing of *Sacriledge*. Indeed all the Triumphs of the *Romans* were but ſo many horrid Impieties, and all their Trophies, ſo many Sacriledges. It is not therefore the Religion of the *Romans*, that has made them ſo great, as the impunity

impunity of their Villanies. For how can it be thought, that those *Gods* should favour them in their Wars, against whom they took Arms; and which they did not worship, till they had first led them in Triumph? Besides, what could those *Gods* do for the *Romans*, who had not been able to do any thing against them, either in defence of themselves, or their people? For as for their own *Country-Gods*, they are well known what they were. *Romulus*, *Picus*, *Tiberinus*, *Consus*, *Pilumnus* and *Picunnus*, were all Worshipful *Roman Gods*; And besides these, *Tatius* was the first that made and worshipp'd *Cloacina* (with reverence be it spoken) for a *Goddess*. *Hostilius* built *Temples* to *Fear* and *Paleness*; and soon after, I don't know who rear'd an *Altar* to the *Goddess Ague*. In these Superstitions was *Rome* nurs'd up, and taught to worship Diseases and Indispotions of health! And those two prostitute Harlots, *Flora* and *Acca Laurentia*, whom they rank among their *Divinities*, may very well be reckon'd also

alſo among their *Maladies*. And yet theſe forſooth are the *Gods*, that have enlarg'd the *Roman* Empire, and vanquiſh'd the *Gods* of other Nations; for it would be madneſs to ſuppoſe, that *Mars* the *God* of *Thracia*, *Jupiter* of *Crete*, *Juno* the *Goddeſs* of *Argos*, *Samos* and *Carthage*; *Diana* of *Epheſus* and *Scythia*, the *Mother* of the *Gods*, and the *Deities*, or rather Monſters, of *Egypt*, ſhould ever help the *Romans* againſt their own people, who for ſo many years had been their conſtant Worſhippers. But it may be they were willing to make this Change, becauſe at *Rome* the *Prieſts* are more Holy, and the Sacred *Virgins* more Chaſt than any where elſe? Very likely; when for the moſt part thoſe have ſuffer'd the puniſhment of Inceſt, who committed it leſs cautiouſly; whereas the reſt eſcaped, not by their being leſs criminal, but by having better hap in the concealing of their lewdneſs. And as for the *Prieſts*, where do they play the Whore-maſters more, than in the Temples and before the Altars? Here they

they exercise the function of Pimps and Panders, and design and contrive Adulteries: Neither does Lust and Debauchery abound so much in the publick Stews, as in their Vestries and Cells. But besides, were there not other great Empires and States flourishing before these Superstitions were invented, or so much as thought-of? As the *Assyrians*, *Medes* and *Persians*, *Grecians* and *Egyptians*, though they had no *Pontifs*, nor that rabble of *Arvales* and *Salii*, *Vestals* and *Augurs*; nor no Chickens religiously penn'd up, from whose feeding, or refusing their Meat, all measures were taken, and the greatest Affairs of state determin'd. But let's come now to those *Auguries* and *Divinations* by the flight or chattering of Birds, which the *Romans* so religiously observ'd, and the neglect or contempt of which (as you took notice) has prov'd as fatal, as the heeding of the same has been fortunate. Was it because the most solemn dancing of the Barley peckt by the Chickens, was not waited for, that the Armies of *Clodius*,

Junius

Junius and *Flaminius* were defeated? But what ſhall we ſay then of *Regulus*, who religiouſly obſerv'd all theſe, and yet was taken by the Enemy? and ſo did *Mancinus*; and for all that, was forced to ſurrender himſelf upon diſhonourable terms. *Paulus*'s Chickens fed heartily at the Battel of *Cannæ*, yet he periſh'd, and the greateſt part of the Commonwealth with him. And though *Cæſar* made ſlight of the *Auguries* that forbad him to go into *Africa* before Winter, yet had he a ſucceſsful Voyage, and return'd Conqueror; ſo that his contempt of theſe fopperies did but ſeem to favour his Paſſage and Victory. Now as to the *Oracles*, how many things might not I have to ſay concerning them? *Amphiaraus* after his death foretells future events to others, who when alive could not foreſee the treachery of his Wife againſt him, for a Bracelet of Gold. *Tireſias* the blindman propheſies things to come, and yet is not aware of what is preſent. *Ennius* in behalf of *Pyrrhus* counterfeits the Anſwers of *Apollo*,

seeing he was become speechless; whose wary and ambiguous *Oracle* was silenc'd as soon as Men began to be more wise and less credulous. Thus *Demosthenes* was not afraid to accuse the *She-Priests* of *Apollo* of giving such answers as *Philip* would have her, being well acquainted with those Holy jugglings. But what? Will you then deny that *Oracles* and *Auguries* ever hit the truth? Well, suppose we grant it: Pray what will it avail to the Credit of *Oracles*, if among so many lies one true word has, at a venture, been delivered; or that *Chance* has, sometimes, imitated *Design*. But give me leave to go back to the Spring, from whence these Errors flow, and discover the Deep, from which such gross darknesses do issue forth. There are certain impure and vagrant Spirits, who being loaden with Earthly pollutions and desires have sunk themselves down to this lower Orbe, from their Original Station: and those miserable wretches having thus lost the Natural advantages wherewith they were created,

ated, and having given up themſelves to all manner of Vices, they endeavour to comfort themſelves under this calamity, by bringing others into the ſame miſery; for as they have corrupted themſelves, ſo do they delight in nothing more than to corrupt others; and as they have ſeparated themſelves from *GOD*, ſo do they their utmoſt endeavours by falſe ways, Religions and Superſtition, to keep Mankind eſtranged from Him. Theſe *Spirits*, the *Poets* acknowledge to be *Dæmons*; concerning whoſe Nature the *Philoſophers* maintain ſeveral Diſputes; and they were very well known to *Socrates*, who had one of them always attending him, according to whoſe intimations, he either undertook or declin'd all buſineſs. The *Magicians* alſo are very well acquainted with this ſort of *Spirits*, by whoſe help they do all thoſe ſtrange Feats, and Juggling tricks, by which they make us believe, we ſee that which is not, or not to ſee, that which really is; and in a word atchieve to our

great amazement all those extraordinary and astonishing Wonders that are spoken of. Nevertheless *Hostanes*, who was the *Chiefest* of all these *Magicians*, both in word and deed, gives *GOD* the Honour due to Him, and says that the Angels are his Ministers and Messengers, who adore Him with fear and trembling; To which he adds, that the *Dæmons* are Earthly and Vagabond *Spirits*, that hate Mankind. And *Plato*, who found it a hard matter to know *GOD*, did not find it so, to know them. He speaks both of *Dæmons* and *Angels*, and in his *Dialogue* call'd the *BANQUET*, he endeavours to explain the Nature of the former; saying, That they are of a *Middle* substance between *Mortal* and *Immortal*, that is, between a *Body* and *Spirit*; being made of a mixture of Terrestrial grosness, and Celestial purity. By which means they have an easie access to us, to stir up our desires, and by conveighing themselves into our hearts, to affect our Senses, raise our Passions, and kindle in our Souls

Souls the flames of Luſt. Theſe *Dæmons* then, who are mix'd and impure *Spirits*, as we have plainly demonſtrated by the Authority of *Wiſemen*, *Philoſophers*, and *Plato* himſelf, lurk privately in thoſe Statues and Images, which are conſecrated unto them; and by their *Enthuſiaſms* get ſo great an Authority over the minds of men, as of preſent *Deities*; and this, by inſpiring their *Prophets*, dwelling in their Temples; by animating and acting the Entrails of Beaſts; by directing the flying of Birds, determining of Lots, and uttering *Oracles*, which are generally obſcure, and mixt with abundance of lyes; for they both deceive others, and are deceiv'd themſelves; who as they do not know the Truth fully, ſo they oft conceal, and will not confeſs that which they do know, becauſe it tends to their own ſhame and confuſion. Thus they make it their buſineſs to depreſs, and ſink us downwards from Heaven to Earth, and to eſtrange us from *GOD*, by immerſing us into Matter; They

trouble and disquiet our life, molest us with Dreams; and this by the advantage they have, as *Spirits*, to convey themselves into our Bodies; where they counterfeit Diseases, terrifie our Minds, distort our Members, thereby to oblige us to adore them; and that after they are glutted with the reaking steam of Altars, and the blood of slain Beasts, by undoing their own Charms, the honour of Healing might be attributed to them. They are these very *Spirits*, which act those raging mad folks, whom you see running along the streets, and who are every whit as much *Prophets*, as those who give answers in your *Temples*; for they both foame, rage, and are whirl'd about alike: Indeed they are *Dæmons* which possess the one, as well as the other, with this only difference, that the object of their madness does vary. From the same also proceed all those delusions, you even now rehears'd, as that of *Jupiter*'s commanding in a Dream that his Games should be restor'd; the appearance of *Castor* and *Pollux*, on Horse-

Horſeback, and that of a Ship being tow'd along by the girdle of a *Roman* Matron. The moſt now adays, and among them many of your own Party, know very well, that the *Devils* themſelves do oft confeſs all theſe things, when by the torture of our Words, and the Fire of our Prayers, they are driven out and diſpoſſeſs'd. Then it is that *Saturn*, *Serapis* and *Jupiter* with all the Crew of *Gods* you worſhip, being overcome with anguiſh, do declare plainly what they are; nor have they the power by lying, to conceal their own ſhame (as you may be ſure they fain would) though ſome of their deluded Adorers be preſent. Sure you will credit the teſtimony of your own *Gods*, when they witneſs the Truth againſt themſelves, and confeſs they are Devils. For when thoſe Wretches are conjur'd to come forth by the Name of the *True* and *Only GOD*, they tremble and quake within the Bodies they have poſſeſs'd, and either leap forth preſently, or vaniſh by degrees, according as the Faith of the

Patient, and Grace of the Ghostly Physician are stronger or weaker; So that they dread the nearness of those *Christians*, whom at a distance, by your means, they trouble and disturb in their Assemblies; and to that end insinuate themselves into the hearts of the simple and ignorant, and there sow the seeds of hatred against our Religion: For nothing is more natural, than to hate those whom we dread, and give all the trouble we can, to those of whom we stand in awe. So they prepossess and prejudice the hearts of men against us, that they begin to hate us, before they know us; lest knowing us, without this prejudice, they might desire to imitate, or at least not be able to condemn us. Now how unjust it is to pass a Judgment upon things which one knows not, as you do in condemning us, you may take warning from us, who do so heartily repent for having committed the same fault; for we were once as you are, and had the same Sentiments, being involv'd in the same blindness

and

and ſtupidity of Error, when we believ'd that the *Chriſtians* worſhip'd Monſters, devour'd Children, defil'd their Feaſts with Inceſts; without conſidering, that though ſuch things were commonly reported, yet they never were prov'd, and that none all this while has ever confeſs'd the leaſt tittle of any one of theſe Crimes, though beſides the aſſurance of Pardon, the reward of ſuch a diſcovery might have been a great temptation thereunto. Indeed to be a *Chriſtian*, is ſo far from implying any thing that is evil or criminal, that they who are convict, never bluſh at it, nor fear the puniſhment which attends it: No, you ſee them glory in it, and troubled at nothing but that they were ſo no ſooner. Nevertheleſs we our ſelves, at the ſame time when we undertook the Defence of *Parricides*, and perſons guilty of Sacriledges and Inceſt, would not ſo much as hear the Plea that *Chriſtians* were ready to make for themſelves, whom we ſometimes made endure a cruel torture, not out of hatred, but pity, forſooth,

forsooth, that by constraining them through the greatness of torments to renounce their Religion, we might save their lives: Oh! perverse Inquisition, to make use of the Rack, not to force the sufferer to declare the Truth, but to deny it. Now if it so happened that any one, less constant, being overcome with the pains of those tortures, did renounce his Religion, he was received into favour, as if by such an abjuration, he had made atonement for all the Crimes, which are commonly charg'd upon them. By which you may plainly see, that we formerly were of the same mind and persuasion with you, doing the very same things as you do now. But indeed, had you been govern'd by *Reason*, and not by the instigation of *Evil Spirits*, your business would have been to have urg'd the *Christians* not to renounce their Religion; but to confess their Incests, Whoredoms, impious Ceremonies, and their Sacrificing of Infants; which are the fabulous Stories wherewith the same *Dæmons* have fill'd the silly people's

ple's Minds, to make them deteſt and abhor us. But no wonder if all theſe horrid lyes and Fictions do vaniſh away before the appearance of Truth, which thoſe Monſters ſo much oppoſe, making it their buſineſs to ſpread and foment falſe reports. From theſe alſo that Fable had its riſe, That we worſhip an *Aſſe*'s Head. But, I pray you, who can be conceiv'd ſo much a fool, to worſhip ſuch a thing; or rather, who is ſo much a fool as to believe we do it, except thoſe who are guilty of as extravagant and impious Devotions themſelves? For indeed it is you make both *Aſſes* and Stables Holy, by having conſecrated your *Goddeſs Hippona*, and given her the Charge over them; and when you celebrate the ſolemn *Rites* of your *Goddeſs Iſis*, you, with a great deal of *Ceremony*, adorn that *Animal*: Yea, you pay Adoration to the heads of *Oxen* and *Rams*; ſo that you *Worſhip* the ſame Beaſts, which you *Sacrifice*. Some of your *Gods* are made up of a mixt ſhape of *Goats* and *Men*, and others of them have

have the Heads half of *Dogs* and half of *Lyons*. Don't you with the *Egytians* worship and feed an *Ox* under the Name of *Apis*? Neither do you disavow the worship of their other goodly *Deities*; as *Serpents*, *Crocodiles*, and other *Beasts*, *Birds* and *Fishes*; so that it is accounted *Capital*, to kill any one of these *Gods*. Are there not a great many amongst you, who with the *Egyptians*, stand as much in awe of the biting sharpness of an Onion, as of their *Goddess Isis*, and are as much afraid of the noise of breaking wind backward, as of their *God Serapis*? As for such as accuse us of adoring the privy Parts of our *Priests*, they do but charge us with their own Villanies; for such filthy Devotions are very suitable to those debauched and lewd people, among whom 'tis but too common for both Sexes, to prostitute all their Members, and who give the name of Courtesie and kindness to the most extravagant Obscenity and Lasciviousness; who envy the liberty of Strumpets, and commit such unnatural filthiness with

with one another, as no modeſt Tongue can expreſs, or Pen ſet down; and who ſooner grow weary, than aſham'd of their impudent laſciviouſneſs. Oh horrible lewdneſs! They willingly ſuffer thoſe things to be committed upon themſelves, which neither tender age is able to bear, nor the baſeſt of ſlaves will yield to. As for our part, we are ſo far from being guilty of ſuch filthy actions, that we do even bluſh at the bare recital of them; and indeed, I ſhould think my ſelf to tranſgreſs the bounds of Civility, ſhould I inſiſt any longer upon this Matter, though it be in order to defend our Religion. For really you accuſe us, who are Chaſt and Modeſt, of ſuch Crimes, as we could not have believed there had been ſuch, had there not been the proofs of them from among your ſelves. As to that which you ſay, that we worſhip a wicked Perſon and his Croſs, you are greatly miſtaken; for how could he have deſerv'd to be worſhipp'd, had he been an Evil-doer; or to be believ'd a *GOD*, had he been only

only Earthly? He is surely very miserable, who reposes all his confidence in a mortal man, since all hopes of his help dye with him. The *Egyptians* indeed are guilty of this folly, who chuse a Man for the Object of their Worship, whom they pray unto; consult upon all occasions, and to whom they offer Sacrifice. But all this while, whether he will or no, he that is a *God* to others, is but a *Man* to himself, and though he may deceive others, he cannot deceive his own Conscience. Upon Kings and great Persons also base flattery has bestow'd the Title of *Gods*; whereas it had been enough to have paid them their due honours; though to speak the truth, Honour is properly due only to those who are eminently deserving, as Love is to excellently good Men. Thus they invoke these Divine Powers, they pray before their Images, implore the help of their *Genii*, that is, their *Dæmons*, and hold it a less Crime for a Man to be perjur'd when he swears by *Jupiter*, than when he swears by the Em-

Emperor's *Genius*. We neither worſhip Croſſes, nor wiſh to be nail'd to them. You your ſelves are more likely to adore them, who worſhip Wooden *Gods*, that are made of the ſame Matter. And what are your Banners and Standards, but gilt and beautified Croſſes? Nay, the very Trophies of your Victories do not only bear the figure of a Croſs, but of a Crucified Man. Indeed the Sign of the Croſs is naturally repreſented in many things, as in a Ship, when under Sail, or when row'd with Oars; alſo when a Man prays to *GOD* with his hands ſtretched forth, he makes the ſame Figure; So that the Figure of the Croſs, has both a ground in *Natural Reaſon*, and in your *Religion*, as being formed in the moſt Solemn action of it, Prayer.

NOW I would fain meet with that Man, that ſays, or believes, that the blood of a murther'd Infant, is the initiating *Ceremony* of our Religion. Firſt, who could have the heart to ſhed the blood of a young Innocent, that

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is but newly born? Surely none can imagine or believe such a Crime, but he who can commit it. 'Tis you that expose your Children, new-born, to wild Beasts and Birds, and strangle them at their coming into the World: Nay, there are some among you, who by taking Potions, to cause abortion, destroy them in the Womb, and are guilty of their death, even before they are born. Which cruelty you have learned of your *Gods*; For *Saturn* was not contented to expose his own Children, but devour'd them himself: Upon which account they were us'd in some parts of *Africa* to offer him such little Infants, whom they prevented from crying, by stopping their mouths with kisses, that they might not sacrifice sad and mournful Victims to their *Gods*. It was also a Custom among the *Scythians*, to sacrifice Strangers that lodg'd with them; which a King of *Egypt* also practis'd. The *Gauls* sacrificed humane, or rather inhumane, Offerings to *Mercury*. The *Roman* Priests have upon some occasions overwhelm'd and buryed

buried a *Grecian* Man and Woman, as likewiſe a Man and Woman of *Gaul*, alive: And at this day the ſolemn Worſhip paid to *Jupiter Latiaris*, is cutting of a Man's throat; which, indeed, very well becomes *Saturn*'s Son, thus to gorge himſelf with the blood of a Criminal. From whence, I ſuppoſe, it was, that *Catiline* learn'd to ratifie his Conſpiracy with humane blood; and that *Bellona* does ſtill oblige thoſe to drink a draught of it, who conſecrate themſelves to her ſervice. With which bloody Medicine, a thouſand times worſe than the Diſeaſe, the Falling-ſickneſs is alſo cured. Nor are they much leſs barbarous, who from the Amphitheatre take and eat wild Beaſts, all beſmear'd with blood, and newly fed with the fleſh and entrails of Men. For our part, it is not lawful for us, either to ſee or hear of Murthers committed; and ſo much do we abhor Humane blood, that we eat not even that of Beaſts. As for our inceſtuous and promiſcuous Feaſts, it is a Calumny invented at a conſultation of Devils, on

purpose to obscure the glory of our Chastity, and deter Men from our Religion, before they had try'd it, by the horror of so great a Crime; and what your *Orator Fronto* has said concerning it, is rather an *Invective* than an *Evidence*. But, really, it's your selves, that are guilty of Incests, and not we. The *Persians* marry their own Mothers; the *Egyptians* and the *Athenians*, their Sisters. Your Stories and Tragedies, wherein you take so much delight, boast of Incests; and so you worship *Gods*, who have committed Incest with their own Mothers, Daughters, and Sisters. 'Tis therefore no wonder that that Vice is so frequent and fashionable amongst you, since your very *Gods* are your encouraging Examples and Complices. And indeed, it is no strange thing, if oft at unawares you commit Incest, by your whoring indifferently every where, and by exposing your Children to the mercy of others; so that it cannot well be supposed, but that you sometimes light upon them. Thus you see that whilst you accuse us of feign'd

feign'd Inceſts, you are guilty of real ones your ſelves. But *Chriſtians* are not wont to make an outward ſhew of their Chaſtity; but enſhrine it in their Minds, and do not ſtudy ſo much to ſeem chaſt, as to be really ſo. All of us have either one only wedded Wife, or no Woman at all. As for our *Feaſts*, they are not only Chaſt, but Sober; for we do not ſpend our time in over-charging our ſtomachs with Meat and Drink; but we temper the joys of our Feaſts with the gravity and ſeriouſneſs of our Converſation. And as we are thus Chaſt in our Aſſemblies, ſo are we no leſs ſuch every where elſe. There are many amongſt us, who keep themſelves undefil'd and holy in an unmarried ſtate, without boaſting of it; and we are ſo far from being inceſtuous perſons, that ſome of us are even aſham'd of lawful pleaſures. As for what concerns Honors, it doth not follow, that becauſe we decline your Purple and Dignities, that therefore we are of the dregs of the people; nor are we to be accoun-

ted Factious, if we all aſpiring after the ſame felicity keep company with one another, and all meet together as peaceably as we behave our ſelves ſingly and alone. Nor ought we to be accus'd for prating in corners, if you be either aſham'd or afraid to hear us in publick. And if our Number daily increaſes, it is not our Crime, but our Commendation; an excellent courſe of life, is not only apt to engage thoſe who are enter'd into it to perſevere and continue in it, but to invite and allure others to it. We do not know one another by any marks we have on our bodies, as you fancy; but by our modeſty and innocency. That we love one another ſo entirely, as you are troubled to ſee it, is, becauſe we know not how to hate. And that we call one another *Brethren*, which you envy us for, is, becauſe we have all *One* and the ſame *Father*, one and the ſame *Faith*, and one and the ſame *Hope*. But for your part, you do not owne one another; you rage with envy and hatred againſt one another; and the

the only ſign of your Brotherhood is Parricide, and your frequent imbruing your hands in the blood of your neareſt Relations. But you ſuppoſe, that we conceal *That* which we worſhip, becauſe we have neither *Temples* nor *Altars*. To what purpoſe ſhould we make any form or repreſentation of *GOD*, whoſe living Image, Man himſelf is? Or what *Temple* ſhould we raiſe to *Him*, ſince this whole *World*, which was made by Him, is not able to contain Him? Or ſhall we Mortals, who live in great Palaces, confine the Incomprehenſible *Glory* of *HIS MAJESTY*, to the narrow compaſs of ſome *Temple* or *Chappel*? Were it not much better to dedicate our *Mind* for the place of his *Abode*; and conſecrate our *Heart* for his *Altar*? Shall we offer to *GOD* Sacrifices and Oblations of ſuch Creatures, as he has made for our uſe? Would not this look indeed as if we had a mind to reject his Bounty, and to throw back his Gifts into his own Hands; which ſpeaks the greateſt ingratitude, eſpecially ſince the only ac-

ceptable Offering to him, is a good Mind and a pure Heart, with a ſincere Conſcience. So that he that lives innocently, prays to *GOD* acceptably; he that deals juſtly, preſents *Him* with an Offering of a ſweet ſavour; he who abſtains from fraud, doth moſt effectually propitiate and atone the *Deity*; and he that reſcues a Man that is in danger of his life, does kill the fatteſt Sacrifice. Theſe are our Sacrifices; theſe are our Myſteries; and with us, he is moſt Devout and Religious, who is moſt Juſt. But you wonder, that we neither can ſhew to others the *GOD* whom we Worſhip, nor ſee him our ſelves. Does this ſeem ſtrange to you? Why, for this very reaſon we do moſt aſſuredly believe *Him* to be *GOD*, becauſe we can perceive *Him*, but cannot ſee *Him*. For his omnipotent *Virtue* and *Power* is always preſent before our eyes, in the Works which he has made, and in the whole courſe of *Nature*; when it thunders, when it lightens, when it is fair; all his works proclaim *Him*: Let it not therefore

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ſeem ſtrange to you, that you do not ſee *GOD*. All things are mov'd and driven by the Wind, and yet you ſee it not; And the Sun it ſelf, that makes all things to be ſeen, is in a manner inviſible, by reaſon of its ſuperlative and dazling brightneſs; inſomuch as ſhould we gaze long, and ſtedfaſtly fix our eyes on it, it would blind them, and put them out. And canſt thou think thy ſelf able to bear the ſight of his Glory, who made the Sun, and is the *Fountain* of all *Light*, when thou art afraid of his *Lightnings*, and hideſt thy ſelf from his *Thunder?* Beſides, wouldſt thou ſee *GOD* with thy Eyes of fleſh, when thou canſt neither ſee nor take hold of thine own Soul, by which thou doſt live and ſpeak? But perhaps you will ſay, *GOD* is ignorant of what we do, and *He* being in Heaven, can neither conſider all, nor take knowledge of every particular perſon and his concernments. How greatly are you miſtaken? For how can *He* be far from any of us, when all things in *Heaven* and *Earth*,

and in the immense space beyond them, are full of *Him*, and known to *Him*. *He* is not only with us, but within us; And as the *Sun*, though fixed in the *Heavens*, yet diffuses it self through the whole *Universe*, is present every where, and mingles its light with every thing, without staining its brightness; so with much more reason, can *nothing* be hid from, or secret to *GOD*, the *Author* and *Beholder* of *all things*; the *Darkness* hides not from *Him*, for *He* is there also; nor the *thoughts* of *Men*, which are the truer *Darkness* of the *two*. We live not only under His *Governance*, but, as I may say, with *Him*. Neither ought we to presume upon our great Numbers, as supposing that one may easily escape unseen among so vast a Multitude; For though we may seem to our selves a great many, yet are we but a few with respect to *GOD*. We, indeed, divide and distinguish the *Earth* into *Countries* and *Nations*; but to *GOD* this whole *World* is but one *House*. *Kings* cannot acquaint themselves with the State and

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Concerns of their own *Kingdoms*, without the Eyes of many Miniſters; but the *MONARCH* of the whole *World* needs none to inform *Him*; we being not only under his Eye, but even in his *Boſom*. You ſay, it avail'd nothing to the *Jews*, that they worſhipped *One* Only *GOD*, with *Temples*, *Altars*, and a vaſt Number of *Ceremonies*; but in this you miſtake through ignorance, if either not remembring, or not knowing the Hiſtory of former times, you take notice only of ſome latter Events: For whilſt they ador'd our *GOD* holily, religiouſly and innocently. (I ſay Our *GOD*, for the ſame is the *GOD* of the whole *World*) whilſt they obey'd his Juſt *Commands* and wholeſome *Laws*, they became of a ſmall Number, a mighty Nation; of *poor*, they were made *rich*, and from a ſtate of *Slavery*, arriv'd to a moſt puiſſant *Monarchy*: A few of them, and unarm'd, put to flight great Armies and overthrew them, the Elements at *God*'s command fighting for them. Look into their own Writings, or if it like you

you better, into those of the *Romans*; read what *Josephus* and *Antonius Julianus* (not to mention those Historians that were before them) write of that *People*, and you'l find, that their Sins drew down Calamities upon them, and whatever Evils befell them, were long before prophesied would overtake 'em, in case they should still continue in their Rebellion: So that indeed they forsook *GOD*, before they were forsaken of *Him*, and were not (as you impiously say) taken Captives with their *GOD*, but given up by *Him*, as deserters of his Discipline and Law.

AS to what concerns the general Conflagration of the Universe, it is a vulgar Error, to think it a thing difficult or impossible that the World should all on the sudden be set on fire, and consum'd by that means. There is no man doubts, but that which has a Beginning must have an End, and that that which is made, must finally perish; That the Heavens themselves, and all things therein contain'd, as they

they had a Beginning, muſt likewiſe have an End; and that ceaſing to be nouriſh'd by the exhalations of freſh and ſalt-waters, they will be inflam'd; for ſo the *Stoicks* ſtedfaſtly believe, that all the moiſture of *Nature* being ſpent, the whole World will preſently take fire: And the *Epicureans* are likewiſe of the ſame Opinion, as touching the ruin of the Univerſe, and the Conflagration of the Elements. As for *Plato*, he ſaith, That ſome parts of the World are at times drown'd with floods and inundations, others conſum'd by fire; and though he ſaid that it was made ſo at the firſt, as that it might continue for ever; yet he adds, that *GOD*, *Who* is the *Maker* of it, may deſtroy it when *He* pleaſes. Which is not at all to be wonder'd at, that a Workman can, and may take to pieces his own Work. So that herein you ſee the *Philoſophers* do fully agree with *us*; not that we do follow their ſteps, but they have taken ſome ſhadow of this Truth out of the predictions of our *Prophets*, and have fourbiſh'd and

dreſs'd

dreſs'd it up after their own way. Thus alſo the moſt renown'd amongſt them, firſt *Pythagoras*, and eſpecially *Plato*, have deliver'd down to us, though very much corrupted and maimed, the Doctrine of another Life after this; for they aſſert, That the Souls of Men after the diſſolution of their bodies, do perpetually remain, and are continually paſſing into new Bodies; and perverting the Truth ſtill more, they add, That the Souls of Men do return into the bodies of Beaſts and Birds; an Opinion which does more beſeem a *Mountebank* or *Juggler*, than a grave *Philoſopher*. But it is enough for us, that your *Wiſemen* themſelves do in ſome ſort agree with *us*. And who is ſo much a fool, as to deny, that *He* who at firſt made Man, can as eaſily reſtore and renew him? For as he is nothing after Death, ſo neither was he any thing before Life; And therefore why ſhould we think it ſtrange, that he who at the beginning was made of nothing, ſhould of nothing (as to us) be repair'd and recover'd

ver'd to a new Life; eſpecially ſince it is much more difficult to create a thing which never was, than to reſtore that to its former Being, which has already been? Or do you believe, that every thing which diſappears to our dull ſight, does periſh in the ſight of *GOD*? Whether the Body moulder into duſt, or be diſſolv'd into water, or be reduc'd to aſhes, or be attenuated into Steam and Air, it is only withdrawn out of our ſight, but to *GOD* it is preſerv'd in the ſeveral Elements into which it is chang'd. Neither do we fear, as you fancy, that any manner of prejudice comes to our Bodies by Burial; only we obſerve the *Cuſtom* of interring Dead Bodies, as the beſt. Do but look about you, and you'l ſee how, to our comfort, whole *Nature* is a lively Pourtraicture and Repreſentation of our *Reſurrection*. The Sun riſes and ſets, and ſo do the Stars; Flowers dye and ſpring up again; Trees renew their green Veſture every year; and Seeds, unleſs they dye and putrifie in the Earth, do

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not return to a new life. And why may not our Bodies, like Trees in Winter, hide and preserve their life and vigour, under a seeming withering and deadness? Indeed, you cannot expect to see this in the depth of Winter, but must stay till that great Spring comes, which shall make our Bodies to flourish and live again. Nor am I ignorant that there are very many, who being sensible of their own demerits, do rather wish, than believe, that they shall not be after Death; chusing of the two, rather utterly to be extinguish'd, than to be restor'd to life again, only to be punish'd; which Errour encreases daily, by reason of the extreme licentiousness of the Age, and the long forbearance of *GOD*, whose Judgments the slower they are, by so much the more justly and heavily are they laid on at last. And yet Men are told both by the Writings of *Wisemen* and *Poets*, that there is a *Stygian* Lake, and an ever-burning River, prepar'd for the Eternal punishment of the Wicked, according to the Oracles of

of true *Prophets*, as well as the diſcoveries of the *Dæmons* themſelves. Hence it is the *Poets* make *Jupiter* to ſwear by the burning Rivers, and dark Deep; for as he foreſees the torments deſign'd both for himſelf and his worſhippers, ſo does he fear and tremble at them, as being without meaſure, and without end. For in wonderful wiſe this Fire does both conſume our Bodies and repair them, devour and nouriſh them at once; like the flaſhes of Lightning, which blaſt and kill the body without conſuming it; or thoſe *Vulcano's* of *Ætna* and *Veſuvius*, and others that burn continually, without waſting or going out. Thus this infernal penal Fire is ſtrangely fed, without diminution of its Fewel, and preys for ever upon the Bodies of the Damn'd without waſting them. Now, that *GOD* doth deſervedly puniſh them that know him not, impious and wicked men, none but prophane Wretches can deny, ſince it is ſcarce a leſs heinous Crime, not to know the *Father* and *Lord* of all things, than to provoke

voke and affront *Him*. And although the Ignorance of *GOD*, is enough to make Men lyable to punishment, as the true Knowledge of *Him*, doth avail for their Pardon and Indemnity; yet if we *Christians* be compar'd with you, notwithstanding that upon some of us our Discipline hath less effect, we shall be found much the Better Men. For you forbid Adulteries, and commit them; whereas we are known as Men, to our Wives alone. You content your selves only to punish the outward *Act*; whereas with us the very *Thought* of Evil is a Crime. You are afraid that other men should be conscious of your faults, but we stand in awe even of our own Consciences, because we cannot fly nor hide our selves from them. The Prisons are crouded with numbers of your own, but you find not one *Christian* there, except he be either a *Confessor*, or an *Apostate?* Neither let any think to comfort himself with this, That all Humane Actions are subject to unavoidable *Fate* and *Destiny:* For though we

we attribute ſome Events to *Chance*, yet it is undeniably certain, that the Mind of Man is free in the choice of his Actions, which are therefore only puniſhable and not his Condition. What is Fate, but what *GOD* has ſpoken and decreed concerning every one of us, who being able to foreſee the Matter of His own Decree, ſuits them to every ones deſerts and circumſtances; ſo he puniſhes in us, not the Deſtiny of our Nativity, but the ill diſpoſition of our Minds? But no more of this Matter for the preſent; which if it be not ſufficient, we may have occaſion to treat of it more amply another time. Only let me obſerve to you now, that if we are poor (which you are continually upbraiding to us) this is not a reproach, but an Honor to us; for as the Mind is apt to grow diſſolute by Luxury and Exceſs, ſo is it many times confirm'd in Virtue, by Frugality and a mean Eſtate. And yet how can he be poor who lacks nothing, who covets nothing that others have, and who is rich towards *GOD*? He indeed is

voke and affront *Him*. And although the Ignorance of *GOD*, is enough to make Men lyable to punishment, as the true Knowledge of *Him*, doth avail for their Pardon and Indemnity; yet if we *Christians* be compar'd with you, notwithstanding that upon some of us our Discipline hath less effect, we shall be found much the Better Men. For you forbid Adulteries, and commit them; whereas we are known as Men, to our Wives alone. You content your selves only to punish the outward *Act*; whereas with us the very *Thought* of Evil is a Crime. You are afraid that other men should be conscious of your faults, but we stand in awe even of our own Consciences, because we cannot fly nor hide our selves from them. The Prisons are crouded with numbers of your own, but you find not one *Christian* there, except he be either a *Confessor*, or an *Apostate?* Neither let any think to comfort himself with this, That all Humane Actions are subject to unavoidable *Fate* and *Destiny:* For though we

we attribute ſome Events to *Chance*, yet it is undeniably certain, that the Mind of Man is free in the choice of his Actions, which are therefore only puniſhable and not his Condition. What is Fate, but what *GOD* has ſpoken and decreed concerning every one of us, who being able to foreſee the Matter of His own Decrees, ſuits them to every ones deſerts and circumſtances; ſo he puniſhes in us, not the Deſtiny of our Nativity, but the ill diſpoſition of our Minds? But no more of this Matter for the preſent; which if it be not ſufficient, we may have occaſion to treat of it more amply another time. Only let me obſerve to you now, that if we are poor (which you are continually upbraiding to us) this is not a reproach, but an Honor to us; for as the Mind is apt to grow diſſolute by Luxury and Exceſs, ſo is it many times confirm'd in Virtue, by Frugality and a mean Eſtate. And yet how can he be poor who lacks nothing, who covets nothing that others have, and who is rich towards *GOD*? He indeed is

rather poor, who having much, ſtill covets more: And to ſpeak my mind freely, no man is ſo poor by Fortune, as we are all by Nature. The Birds have no Patrimony to live upon, and the Cattel upon a thouſand hills are provided for only from day to day; and we live upon theſe who have nothing certain to live upon, for they are all made for us, and we poſſeſs them all, if we covet them not. Therefore as he that travels on the road, is moſt eaſie when he carries leaſt about him; ſo in this journey of life he is happieſt who being eas'd by Poverty, doth not go ſighing under the weight and burthen of Riches, which if we thought needful for us, we might lawfully beg them of *GOD*, who, no doubt, would not deny us ſomething of that *ALL* which is *His*: But we chuſe rather to deſpiſe riches, than poſſeſs them. Our moſt earneſt *Wiſhes* are for *Innocence*; our moſt fervent *Prayers* for *Patience*; we had much rather live well and vertuouſly with a little, than prodigally and luxurioufly with

with a great Eſtate. When we undergo the troubles of this Life, and ſuffer the infirmities of our Nature, we don't ſo much account them pains and puniſhments, as a warfare in which we are engaged: For we find that our courage gains ſtrength from our infirmities, and that calamities and afflictions are the uſual Diſcipline of Vertue; it being certain that the vigour of our Bodies, as well as our Minds, is apt to decay for want of exerciſe. Thus all thoſe great Men, whom you magnifie as ſuch Examples of Vertue, became Famous no other way, but by the miſeries and calamities they were exercis'd withall. Neither is it therefore a good conſequence from our ſeeming forlorn condition, to ſay that *GOD* neglects us, or is unable to relieve us; *He* who is the great Governour of all, and the moſt compaſſionate *Lover* of his *Own*. But *He* proves us by adverſities; *He* makes tryal of our temper and diſpoſition by dangers and ſufferings; *He* ſifts our moſt hidden thoughts and inclinations; and to diſcover the bent of our

wills to the utmoſt, *He* calls us to ſuffer death for *Him*, being well aſſured that nothing can periſh in his hands, and miſcarry under his care. In ſhort, as men try *Gold* by fire, ſo does he refine *us* by afflictions. And indeed how delightful a Spectacle muſt it be to *GOD*, to ſee a Chriſtian courageouſly encountring his pains, and undauntedly preparing himſelf for all manner of threats, puniſhments and torments; to ſee him boldly look Death and the Executioner of it in the face, and without the leaſt alteration, to throw himſelf into the devouring flames; to ſee him aſſert his liberty againſt Kings and Princes, and to yield to none but *GOD*, whoſe *He* is; in a word, like a Conqueror, to triumph over his Judg; for he is really victorious, who has obtained what he ſtrives for? Where is the Souldier that would not boldly provoke and challenge dangers in the preſence of his General, knowing that none but ſuch as give good proof of themſelves, ſhall be rewarded? And yet a General cannot give what he

he has not; I mean, he cannot length-
en our days, though he may beſtow
Honors upon us for our Courage and
brave Exploits. But the Souldier of *JE-
SUS CHRIST* is ſo far from being
abandon'd, even in Death it ſelf, that
he triumphs over it, and leads it Cap-
tive: So that though he may ſeem to
be miſerable, yet he cannot be ſo. You
your ſelves exalt, even to the Skies,
ſuch as have couragiouſly ſuffer'd for
their Country: Witneſs *Mutius Scæ-
vola*, who being miſtaken in his attempt
upon the King, had certainly been put
to death by his Enemies, had he not,
by a moſt undaunted courage, burnt
off his own right hand before their
eyes, upon the Altar. And how ma-
ny are there amongſt us, who with-
out the leaſt ſhreaking or crying out,
have endur'd, not only to have their
right hands, but their whole bodies
conſum'd to aſhes, when they might
with one word have deliver'd them-
ſelves from thoſe extreme tortures?
But why do I compare our Men with
Mutius and *Aquilius* and *Regulus*?

Our very Women and Children make slight of crosses and tortures, are unconcern'd at the sight of wild and ravenous Beasts; and in a word, by a Patience divinely inspir'd, make a mock of torment in all its frightful shapes. And yet so miserably blind are you, as not to consider that there are none who will either endure torments without cause, or can be so courageous under them, without a supernatural and *Divine* Assistance. But this is that which perhaps deceives you, That you see those who know not *GOD* to abound in *Riches*, flourish in *Honor* and excel in *Power* and *Dignity*. Poor Wretches! They are lifted up on high, that they may have the greater fall; They are Beasts fatten'd for Sacrifice, and so many Victims crown'd before their Slaughter; so that one would think, seeing their lewd Lives, that they are set upon Thrones, only to abuse their Power, and to sin with more licentiousness. Besides, without the knowledge of *GOD* there can be no solid Felicity, since

ſince all the things of this World are like a Dream, which vaniſhes before we can lay hold of it. Kings feel as many fears in themſelves, as they cauſe in others, and though they are guarded with a great retinue, yet they are alone in dangers. You are rich (it's true) but it is not well to truſt inconſtant *Fortune*. Beſides, if things be rightly conſider'd, ſo much Luggage, for ſo ſhort a Journey is more cumberſome than uſeful. You glory in your *Purple* and *Dignities*; but without cauſe, ſince Scarlet and rich Veſtments are but a pitiful Ornament to you, if your Souls be tainted with Sin and polluted with Vice. You pretend to be of a great *Family* and of Noble *Parentage*: But don't you know that we are all Equal by our Birth, and that Virtue only ought to make the difference among Men. It is therefore with good reaſon that *Chriſtians*, who aim at being eſteem'd only upon the account of their Virtuous Manners and Modeſt Behaviours, deſpiſe your Shews and Pomps, and fly from them as de-

lightful Inticers and Corrupters of men; and with the same reason also they abstain from your Religious *Worship* and *Ceremonies*, as well knowing what was their Beginning and Original. For who can but abhor to hear and see those confused Contests and Shouts of the Multitude at your Chariot-races? What sober Mind is not astonish'd to see the Art of killing Men, publickly profess'd in your *Gladiators* Games? And for your *Theaters*, as the madness there is no less, so they exceed in all manner of infamous lewdness and filthiness; where a bold and shameless Actor represents or relates Adulteries, and the lascivious Jester by making Love, incites to Lust and Lasciviousness; where they dishonor your *Gods* by ascribing sighs and hatred, and Whoredoms, the Passions and the Vices of men to them. With feigned griefs they draw real tears from your eyes; so that you can lament personated Murthers, and take delight in true ones. If we abhor the remainders of your *Sacrifices*, and of the Wine

Wine that has been preſented upon your *Altars*, this is not to be interpreted as an acknowledgment of our fear, but an aſſerting of our juſt liberty. For though nothing can corrupt the Gifts of *GOD*, which *Nature* has produc'd for our uſe, yet we willingly abſtain from thoſe prophane Oblations, leſt we might be thought either to acknowledge the *Dæmons*, to whom they are conſecrated, or to be aſham'd of our own *Religion*.

But how come you to fancy that we have an Antipathy to Flowers? Don't we gather the Lilly and the Roſe, and whatever the Spring affords, and is eſteem'd either for its beauty or fragrancy? We both ſtrew them, and tye them up into Noſe-gays, and make them into Garlands, which we hang about our necks. But I hope you will excuſe us, if we don't wear Garlands on our Heads, and are of opinion that Flowers ought to be ſmelt by the Noſe, and not by the hair or hinder part of the Head. Neither do we think it neceſſary to crown the Dead with

with Garlands; but wonder at you for doing of it. For what good can Flowers do them, if they have no sense? Or if they have any, why do you expose them to the funeral flames? Besides, if they be happy, they do not need them; and if they be miserable, Flowers will be but a small comfort to them. As for us, we celebrate the Funerals of our Dead Friends with the same Modesty and Composedness that appears in our whole Life. We don't crown them with Garlands that fade away, they being crown'd with such as are made of immortal and never-dying Flowers, by the hand of *GOD* himself. We are moderate in our desires, being assur'd of the Bounty of our good *GOD*; and freed from all fear, by the certain hopes of a future Felicity; and animated to do and suffer for *Him*, by the Faith of his Glorious presence with us: Insomuch as we have not only a Happiness in reversion at the resurrection of the Just; but are happy already in the contemplation and

and proſpect of our future Bleſſedneſs. Therefore let that *Athenian* Droll, *Socrates*, enjoy the comfort of his own confeſſion, that he knows nothing, and glory in the deceitful Teſtimony given him by the Oracle, upon that account; Let *Arceſilas* and *Carneades*, *Pyrrho*, and the reſt of the *Academicks* be continually deliberating and doubting; Let *Simonides* for ever ask a longer day for the giving his Anſwer; for our part we do not value thoſe *Philoſophers*, whom we know to have been *Tyrants*, *Corrupters*, and *Adulterers*, and who were never more Eloquent, than when they declaim'd againſt their own Vices. We don't endeavour to make a ſhew of Wiſdom in our Garb, but to have it ſhine forth in the diſpoſition of our Minds and Manners. We don't talk of great things, but live and do them. In ſhort, we make it our glory to have attain'd that which they ſo earneſtly ſought for, but could never find. Why are we ſo unthankful to God? Why do we envy our ſelves our own happineſs, that it ſhould

ſhould be our lot to ſee the *Divine* Truth come to its full ripeneſs in our days? Let us enjoy this great Bleſſing and advantage of being in the right, and having the Truth on our ſide, with that temper and modeſty which becomes us. Let Superſtition be control'd; let all impiety be purg'd away, and let the true Religion be preſerv'd and continue for ever.

WHEN *Octavius* had thus ended his Diſcourſe, we remain'd a good while in a kind of amazement, looking earneſtly upon one another, without ſpeaking one word. For my part I was almoſt tranſported with admiration, that he had both by *Arguments*, and *Examples*, and the *Authority* of Teſtimonies, which his reading furniſh'd him withall, adorn'd ſo good a Cauſe, and ſo clearly made out thoſe things which are more eaſily *felt* than *expreſt*; being moſt of all pleas'd to ſee that he had both fought and foil'd them at their own Weapons, and clearly demonſtrated, that Truth is not only eaſie, but hath many favourable advantages on its ſide.

We

Whilſt I was thus ſilently muſing with my ſelf, *Cæcilius* breaks out into theſe words; I congratulate *Octavius* moſt heartily, and my own happineſs alſo, upon this occaſion: Neither do I expect your Sentence; We are both Conquerors; nor am I unjuſt in challenging the Victory; for if *Octavius* has had the better of me, I at the ſame time do triumph over my own Errors. Therefore, as to what concerns the main Queſtion, I both own a *Providence*, and believe in *GOD*; and for the reſt, I agree with you touching the ſincerity and truth of *your*, or (to ſpeak more properly) *Our RELIGION*. Nevertheleſs there remain ſome few things (not in oppoſition to Truth, but needful for my fuller information) of which I deſire we may entertain ſome further Diſcourſe. But we will put off this till to morrow (the Sun being now near ſetting) that at our leiſure, and with more convenience we may throughly diſcuſs this whole *Matter*.

WHEN *Cæcilius* had thus freely utter'd his Mind, As for me (ſaid I) I

am

am overjoy'd upon the account of us all, and in particular, that *Octavius* has done me so great a pleasure by his Victory, as to deliver me from the envy of judging between my Friends. Nevertheless I shall not launch forth into the Praises of *Octavius*, because I am sensible that I can never give him the Commendations he deserves. Besides, the Testimony of a man, and of one only, is too little: The Great *GOD* is his Reward, who has inspir'd him with so perswasive a Speech, and enabled him to overcome.

THUS we all departed joyfully, *Cæcilius*, because he had believ'd; *Octavius*, because he had overcome; and *my self*, both for the *Faith* of the *One*, and *Victory* of the *Other*.

THE END.

THE *Translator* of this *Book*, teaches the *French* Tongue according to an exact and easie Method. He is to be heard of at Mrs *Gates*'s House in *Bow-Lane*, over against *Basing-Lane*-end, *London*.